

Offender Employment Re-Entry Guide**Table of Contents**

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Offender Employment Services

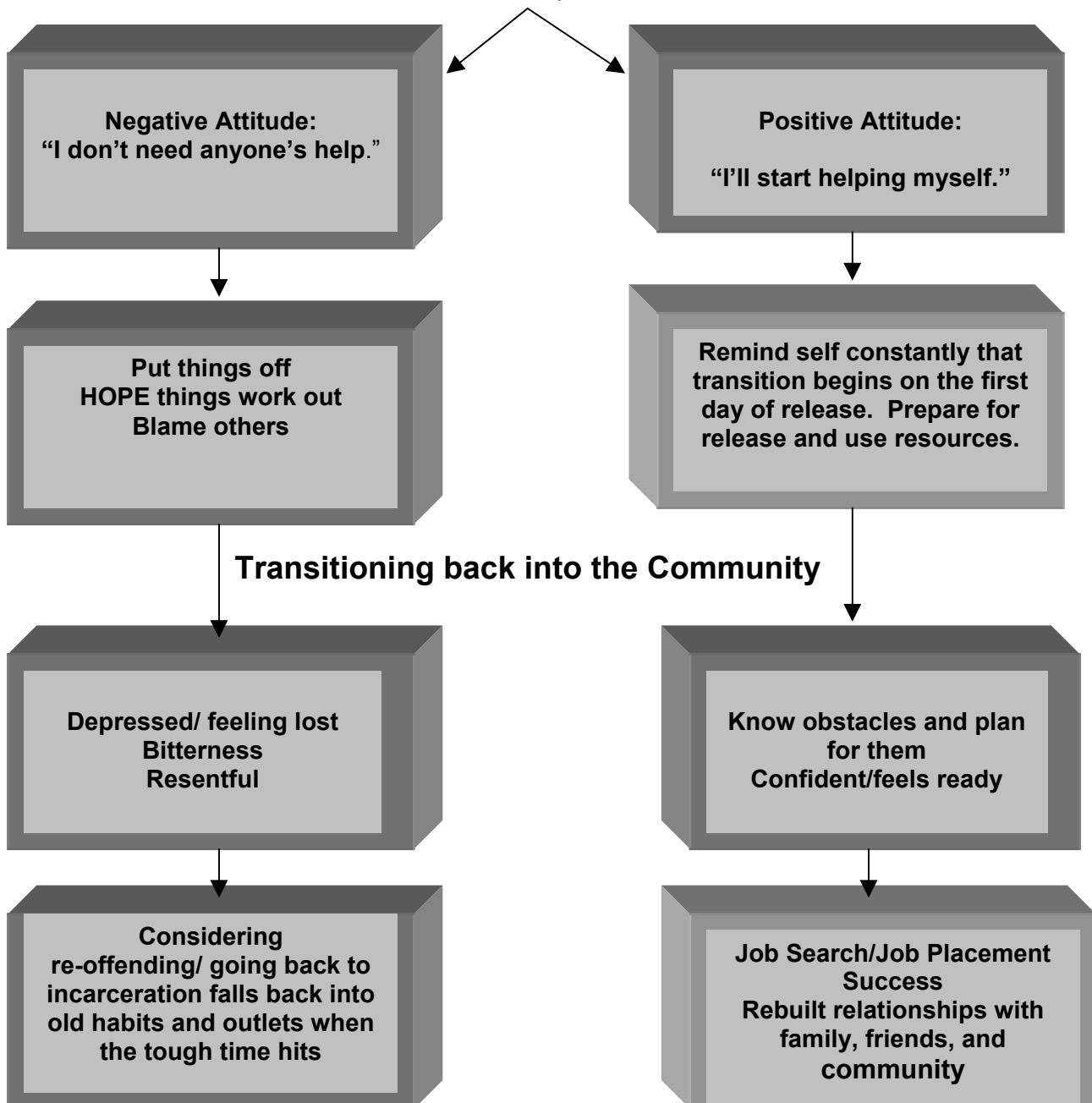
(formerly known as Corrections Clearinghouse)

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Transition Decision Process**Six Transition Questions to consider prior to release.**

- How am I going to make it?
 - Who do I contact?
 - What do I want?
- When will I take action?
 - Where do I look?
- Which path do I take?



Why you'll find this guide is for you

Isn't it frustrating when you really want to do something and you find out later that you did not have the right information? You hear about how important it is to get a job, but getting good information on how to get the job is not always easy. You have to look in many different places to get what you want.

Rather than spend your time looking all over the place for information, you can get everything you need right here. You can make a good start once you leave the institution, and the best part is that you can use the information now.

To make the shift from doing time to the community easier for you, this training guide was prepared with YOU in mind. For example, you'll find:

- What really works in finding a job?
- Taking a real look at yourself by completing a self-examination chart
- Establishing realistic short-term and long-term goals
- How to plan your job search
- How to sell yourself so that employers understand what you can offer them
- How to keep your sanity when you're looking for a job
- Where you can go to find out about resources in a community

So, why go up blind alleys, make wrong turns and "hope that something turns up"? Manage your future, take control of your life and feel better about yourself. Having others always telling you what to do can be disappointing. Good information can give you the power to be what you want to be. Use this Offender Re-Entry Guide as a tool to assist your job search. It is a seven-step process for finding and keeping a job.

Offender Employment Services (OES)

Provide training and technical assistance for offenders to obtain employment and successfully integrate to the community.

Institutional Services

OES provides classroom instruction to incarcerated adult offenders in institutions statewide. Each program participant is taught job search basics, offered re-entry services, and linked to community based organizations.

Transition Fairs

Are events hosting employers, and community-based organizations, at Department of Corrections facilities. Participants receive direct feedback on their current job seeking skills and information to prepare for successful re-entry to the community.

Community Services

OES staff have designed a curriculum customized around the qualifications for Offender Workforce Specialist, and facilitates the training "Breaking Barriers, Providing Services to Ex-Offenders in the WorkSource Environment." The popular workshop is for the staff of community-based organizations, WorkSource Centers, and affiliates to assist ex-offenders effectively.

Carl Perkin's Administration – OES provides technical assistance to and subcontracts with a broad range of service providers including jails, community and technical colleges, community-based organizations, schools and correction centers to provide vocational educational programs, services and activities for juvenile and adult offenders

Jail Industries Board (JIB)

OES serves as the state administrative unit for the Executive staff of the Jail Industries Board. The Board, composed of Governor appointed business leaders and criminal justice officials, is charged with providing statewide leadership and technical assistance to establish, develop, and maintain jail industries work programs and education opportunities through partnerships with labor, business, victims, communities and government.

Employment Resources

Washington State Bonding Program – Provides individual fidelity bonds for at-risk applicants who are denied coverage by commercial carriers because of a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment, history of alcohol or drug abuse, poor credit history, lack of employment history, or dishonorable military discharge. Bonding is available to any Washington resident who meets the requirements and has a job offer that promises full-time steady work, a reasonable expectation for performance and is not self-employed.



**Employment
Security
Department**
WASHINGTON STATE

OES program offers offender change services in adult corrections facilities. Courses include:

Job Hunter

These services are provided at the following locations:

Airway Heights Corrections Center

Offender Employment Services
W. 11919 Sprague Avenue
PO Box 1899

Airway Heights, WA 99001-1899

Phone: (509) 244-6700 ext. 6281

Coyote Ridge Corrections Center

Offender Employment Services
PO Box 769

Connell, WA 99326-0769

Phone: (509) 543-5848

Cedar Creek Corrections Center

Offender Employment Services
PO Box 37

Littlerock, WA 98556-0037

Phone: (360) 753-7278 Ext. 209

Pine Lodge Pre-Release

Offender Employment Services
PO Box 300

Medical Lake, WA 99022-0300

Phone: (509) 299-2300 x 410

Washington Correction Center for Women

Offender Employment Services
9601 Bujacich Road NW

Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8300

Phone: (253) 858-4252

Community Justice Center/ Spokane

Offender Employment Services

715 E. Sprague

Spokane, WA 99202

Phone: (509) 363-2734

Community Justice Center/ Yakima

Offender Employment Services

202 W. Yakima Ave. Suite 200

Yakima, WA 98902

Phone: (509) 454-3643

**Community Justice Center/
Vancouver**

Offender Employment Services

9105-B NE, Hwy 99

Vancouver, WA 98665

Phone: (360) 571-4350

M-2 Job Therapy

205 Avenue C; PO Box 293

Snohomish, WA 98291-0293

Phone: (360) 568-3268 or 1-877-625-6214

Goodwill Industries of the Inland NW

130 East Third Avenue

Spokane, WA 99202

Phone: (509) 444-4319

Central Office:

Employment Security Department

Offender Employment Services

PO Box 9046

Olympia, WA 98507-9046

Phone: (360) 407-5151

Fax: (360) 407-5218

Web site: <http://www.wa.gov/esd/cch>

Veteran's Programs

Where to get help

Getting your next job may be as simple as talking to your local Veterans' Representatives. In fact, their whole reason for being is putting veterans to work. You can find your Veterans' Representative at your local WorkSource Center. For a listing of your nearest WorkSource, call toll free: 1-877-872-5627, or visit <http://www.go2worksource.com> on the Internet.

Finding a Job

Regardless of how much you know about searching for work, the WorkSource Veterans' Representatives can teach you more. They'll help you identify skills you may not know you have, discover new ways to market them and link you to employers that list jobs with us. And the best news is they're veterans, too, which means they stay in close touch with veterans' organizations and resources to help you.

Good Reasons To Cash In

There are special programs that provide incentives for employers to hire veterans. Your Veterans' Representative can explain how they work and help develop a strategy on how to use them to land a new job.

Special Incentive Programs

Work Opportunity Tax Credit gives employers a tax credit of as much as \$2,400 for hiring a veteran who is a member of a family that recently received welfare assistance or food stamps, or who is an ex-felon and a member of a low-income family. To qualify for the credit a veteran needs to have served over 180 days on active duty, or discharged for a service-connected disability.

Vocational Rehabilitation helps service-connected, disabled veterans find and keep jobs to gain maximum independence. Benefits can be used for on-the-job training, apprenticeships and full-time schooling.

Job and Training Opportunities

There are many other programs specifically designed to help veterans become competitive in today's labor market. Your WorkSource Veterans' Representative will help you to take advantage of these programs.

Washington State Bonding Program

Purpose

Bonding is a unique and innovative tool for marketing an applicant to an employer. As an employer incentive, it conveys a businesslike approach. The employer gets the worker's skills, abilities and knowledge without taking risk of potential employee dishonesty. There are **no forms** or other papers for the employer to sign, and **no processing** to delay matters – **the insurance can be put into effect instantly**. The **bond insurance can apply to any job** and covers any employee dishonesty that occurs on or away from the employer's work facility. Full or part-time employees' paid wages (with federal taxes automatically deducted from pay) can be bonded; these Fidelity Bonds cannot cover self-employment.

Why bonding is needed

Job seekers who have in the past committed a fraudulent or dishonest act, or who have demonstrated other past behavior which casts doubt upon their credibility or honesty, often experience a special barrier to gaining employment due to their personal backgrounds. Such persons are routinely classified as "at-risk" job applicants when their past life experience raises an obstacle to their future ability to secure employment. More specifically, *employers view these applicants as being potentially untrustworthy workers*. This fear is further heightened by the fact that Fidelity Bond insurance commercially purchased by employers to protect against employee dishonesty usually will not cover those at risk –these persons are designated by insurance companies as being "NOT BONDABLE." As a result, at risk job applicants are routinely denied employment.

Ex-offenders, including anyone with a record of arrest, conviction, or imprisonment, and anyone who has ever been on probation or parole, are at-risk job applicants. Others, similarly at risk and NOT BONDABLE **are ex-addicts** (persons with a history of alcohol and drug abuse), persons having a **poor credit record**, or who have declared bankruptcy, **economically disadvantaged persons who lack a work history**, and individuals who were **dishonorably discharged** from the military. Other job seekers also can be classified as at-risk if bonding can eliminate the barrier to their employment.

What is a Fidelity Bond?

Fidelity bonding is a form of business insurance usually purchased to indemnify employers for loss of money or property sustained through the dishonest acts of their employees (i.e. theft, forgery, larceny, and embezzlement). This "employee dishonesty insurance" is generally considered a good business management practice, and is purchased by many employers. However, while other types of insurance set premiums that vary according to the degree of risk, Fidelity Bond premiums are always set based

upon taking no risk. As a result, insurance companies usually will not cover at-risk persons under Fidelity Bonds, a practice that has created a special barrier to employment for the growing large number of persons (i.e. ex-addicts, credit risks, etc.) whose personal credibility is questionable due to other dishonest or deviant past acts.

To apply for the Washington State Bonding Program call OES at (360) 407-5151, or inquire at your nearest WorkSource Center.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) can save an employer as much as \$2,400 in taxes when they hire a worker who historically has had a hard time landing a job. And it's easy. All an employer has to do is hire a qualified worker, fill out the Pre-Screening Notice (8850) and Individual Characteristics Form (9061) and drop them in the mail **within 21 calendar days from the start date of employment**. An ex-felon who **has a hiring date, which is not more than one year after the last date on which they were convicted or released from prison, and is a member of an economically disadvantaged family is qualified for WOTC**.

An employer can get a tax break of 40 percent up to first \$6,000 of the wages paid to a qualified worker who worked at least 400 hours during the first year of employment. That adds up to a \$2,400 tax credit for filling a job they planned to fill anyway. However, if the new employee only works 120 to 399 hours an employer can still receive a credit of up to 25 percent of the qualified first year wages up to \$6,000. This allows a credit amount up to \$1,500.

The Employment Security Department is the "Right Connection" to the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. If an employer wants more information and forms, they can call the WOTC Unit at 1-800-669-9271, or contact their local WorkSource Center.



WorkSource and Affiliates of Washington State

Olympic Consortium Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Clallam County WorkSource Center Serving Clallam and Jefferson Counties	228 W. 1st St., Suite A Port Angeles, WA 98362-2639 Phone: (360) 457-2117 Website: http://www.kitsapgov.com/hr/wsolympic/
WorkSource Kitsap County WorkSource Center Serving Kitsap County	1300 Sylvan Way Bremerton, WA 98310 Phone: (360) 337-4810
WorkSource Jefferson County Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Jefferson County	207 W. Patison Shold Business Park Port Hadlock, WA 98339 Phone: (360) 379-5036
Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Mason County WorkSource Center Serving Mason County	2505 Olympic Hwy N. #420 P.O. Box 1428 Shelton, WA 98594 Phone: (360) 427-2242 Fax: (360) 427-2088 TTY: (360) 427-2249
WorkSource Lewis County WorkSource Center Serving Lewis County	151 N.E. Hampe Way P.O. Box 1187 Chehalis WA 98532 Phone: (360) 748-2360
WorkSource Grays Harbor WorkSource Center Serving Grays Harbor County	Employment Security Department 511 W. Heron P.O. Box 1747 Aberdeen, WA 98520 Phone: (360) 538-2385 or (360) 538-2340
WorkSource Pacific County WorkSource Serving Pacific County	307 E. Robert Bush Dr P.O. Box 188 South Bend, WA 98586 Phone: (360)875-4261

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Long Beach WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pacific County	2601 North Pacific Hwy P.O. Box 876 Long Beach, WA 98631 Phone: (360) 642-6213
Pacific Mountain Workforce Consortium WorkSource Affiliate Serving Thurston County	719 Sleater-Kinney Rd S.E. Ste 200 Lacey WA, 98503 Phone: (360) 786-5586 Fax: (360) 754-4119 Website: http://pmwdc.com/pm/index.htm
Olympia WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate	3738 Pacific Avenue S.E. P.O. Box 9765 Olympia WA, 98507 Main Number: (360) 407-5100 Phone: (360) 407-5101 Fax: (360) 407-5125
Northwest Washington Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Whatcom WorkSource Center Serving Whatcom County	101 Prospect Street Bellingham, WA 98225 Phone: (360) 676-3241 Fax: (360) 671-4948 Website: http://www.app5.wa.gov/Esd/northwest/bellingham/provide.htm
WorkSource Whidbey WorkSource Center Serving Whidbey Island	31975 State Route 20, Suite 3 Oak Harbor, WA 98277 Phone: (360) 675-5966 Fax: (360) 679-7243 Website: http://www.app5.wa.gov/esd/northwest/oakharbor/whidbeyindex.htm
WorkSource Skagit WorkSource Center Serving Skagit County	2021 E. College Way, Suite 210 Mount Vernon, WA 98273 Phone: (360) 336-5781 Fax: (360) 428-6983 Website: http://www.app5.wa.gov/esd/northwest/WorkSourceSkagit/Skagitindex.htm

Mount Vernon Job Service Center Serving Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties	301 Valley Mall Way, Suite 110 Mount Vernon, WA 98273 Phone: (360) 416-3500 Fax: (360) 416-3580
Snohomish County Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Everett WorkSource Center Serving Snohomish County	3201 Smith Ave, Suite 114 Everett, WA 98201 Phone: (425) 258-6300 Fax: (425) 257-1213 Website: http://www.worksourceonline.com/Everett/index.htm
WorkSource Lynnwood WorkSource Center Serving South Snohomish County	20311 52nd Avenue West - Suite 300 Lynnwood, WA 98036 Phone: (425) 673-3300 Fax: (425) 712-3046 Website: http://www.worksourceonline.com/Lynnwood/index.htm
WorkSource Affiliate Sky Valley	19705 State Route 2 Monroe, WA 98272 Phone: (360) 794-1398 Fax: (360) 805-1172
Seattle-King County Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Redmond WorkSource Center Serving King County	7735 178th Place N.E. Redmond, WA 98502 Phone: (425) 861-3700 TTY: (425) 861-37081 Fax: (425) 497-3659 Website: http://www.worksourceskc.org
WorkSource North Seattle WorkSource Center Serving King County	12550 Aurora Ave. N. Seattle, WA 98133 Phone: (206) 440-2500 TTY: (206) 440-2464 Fax: (206) 440-2501 Website: http://www.wa.gov/esd/nseattle

WorkSource Renton WorkSource Center Serving King County	919 S.W. Grady Way Ste 125 Renton, WA 98055 Phone: (206) 205-3500 TTY: (206) 205-3508 Fax: (425) 271-0885 Website: http://www.wsrenton.org
WorkSource Affiliate South Seattle Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving King County	6000 16th Avenue S.W. Seattle, WA 98106-1499 Phone: (206) 764-5803 Fax: (206) 764-7932 TTY: (206) 768-6806 Website: http://dept.seattlecolleges.com/sscccareerservices
WorkSource Affiliate Auburn WorkSource Affiliate Serving King County	2707 I Street N.E. Auburn, WA 98002 Phone: (253) 833-0102 TTY: (253) 804-5353 Fax: (253) 804-5341
WorkSource Affiliate Rainier WorkSource Affiliate Serving King County	2531 Rainier Avenue South Seattle, WA 98144 Phone: (206) 721-5987 Fax: (206) 721-4537 TTY: (206) 721-5986
WorkSource Affiliate Bellevue Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving King County	3000 Landerholm Circle S.E. Bldg 232 Q Bellevue, WA 98155 Phone: (425) 564-2431 TTY#: (425) 564-4087 Fax: (425) 564-2230 Website: http://www.bcc.ctc.edu
WorkSource Affiliate Downtown Seattle WorkSource Affiliate Serving King County	1511 3 rd Avenue, Suite 531 Seattle, WA 98101 Phone: (206) 447-3005 Fax: (206) 447-3383 TTY: 1 (800) 833-6384

Pierce County Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Pierce WorkSource Center Serving Pierce County	1305 Tacoma Ave. So., Suite 201 Tacoma, WA 98402 Phone: (253) 593-7300 Fax: (253) 593-7377 TTY: (253) 593-7319 Email: worksourcepierce@esd.wa.gov
Bates Technical College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	1101 South Yakima Avenue Tacoma, WA 98405-4895 Phone: (253) 680-7238 Fax: (253) 680-7001 TTY: (253) 566-5319
Clover Park Technical College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	4500 Steilacoom Boulevard S.W. Lakewood, WA 98499 Phone: (253) 583-8765 Fax: (253) 589-5709
Goodwill Industries Tacoma WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	714 South 27th Street Tacoma, WA 98409 Phone: (253) 272-5166 Main Toll Free: (800) 584-7980 Fax: (253) 272-3966 TTY: (253) 779-8360
Pierce College Fort Steilacoom WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	9401 Farwest Drive S.W. Lakewood, WA 98498-1999 Phone: (253) 964-6265 Fax: (253) 964-6427 TTY: (253) 964-6228
Department of Corrections WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	1016 South 28th Street Tacoma, WA 98409 Phone: (253) 680-2600 Fax: (253) 597-4330
Tacoma Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	6501 South 19th Street Tacoma, WA 98466-6100 Phone: (253) 566-5188 Fax: (253) 566-6011 TTY: (253) 566-5319

Tacoma Community House WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	1314 South "L" Street Tacoma, WA 98415 Phone: (253) 383-3951 Fax: (253) 597-6687
Vadis WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	1701 Elm Street Sumner, WA 98390 Phone: (253) 863-5173 x228 Fax: (253) 863-2040 TTY: (253) 863-4508 Email address: info@vadis.org
WorkSource Lakewood Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Pierce County	10107 S. Tacoma Way Bldg A Suite 2 Lakewood, WA 98499 Phone: (253) 589-6311 Fax: (253) 589-6349 TTY: (253) 587-6351 Email: worksourcepierce@esd.wa.gov
Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council	
WorkSource Vancouver Town Plaza WorkSource Center Serving Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties	5411 E. Mill Plain Blvd, Suite 15 Vancouver, WA 98661-7046 Phone: (360) 735-5000 Fax: (360) 735-5093
WorkSource Cowlitz (Wahkiakum East) WorkSource Center Serving Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties	P.O. Box 29 711 Vine Street Kelso, WA 98626 Phone: (360) 577-2250 TTY: (360) 578-4249 Fax: (360) 577-2039
WorkSource Cowlitz (Wahkiakum West) WorkSource Center Serving Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties	1526 Commerce Avenue PO Box 2129 Longview, WA 98632 Phone: (360) 425-3430 TTY: 1 (800) 833-6388 Fax: (360) 425.6657

Lower Columbia Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Cowlitz County	1600 Maple Longview, WA 98362 Phone: (360) 442-2331 Fax: (360) 442-2339 TTY: (360) 442-2344 Website: http://lcc.ctc.edu
Stevenson WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Skamania County	704 S.W. Rock Creek Drive PO Box 847 Stevenson WA 98648 Phone: (509) 427-4464 Fax : (509) 427-3640
Clark College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Clark County	1800 E. McLoughlin Blvd Vancouver, WA 98663 Phone: (360) 992-2239 TTY: (360) 992-2835 Fax: (360) 992-2877 Website: http://www.clark.edu
Northcentral Washington/Columbia Workforce Development Area	
WorkSource Okanogan County - Omak WorkSource Center Serving Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Okanogan, and Adams Counties	126 South Main PO Box 3759 Omak, WA 98841 Toll Free: 1 (800) 887-8057 Phone: (509) 826-7310 Fax: (509) 826-7272
Brewster Learning Center WorkSource Affiliate Serving Okanogan County	520 W. Main P.O. Box 1637 Brewster, WA 98812 Phone: (509) 689-8031 Fax: (509) 689-5102
Moses Lake WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Grant and Adams County	1616 S. Pioneer Way Moses Lake, WA 98837 Phone: (509) 766-2559 TTY: (509) 766-6509 Fax: (509) 766-4131

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Mattawa Opportunities WorkSource Affiliate Outstation Serving Grant County	403 Boundary Mattawa, WA 99349 Phone: (509) 932-4045 Fax: (509) 509-932-4909 <i>(Open March through October only. Contact Moses Lake WorkSource Affiliate during winter months)</i>
Wenatchee WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Chelan & Douglas Counties	215 Bridge Street PO Box 1927 Wenatchee, WA 98807 Phone: (509) 665-6605 Fax: (509) 665-3743
Wenatchee Valley College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Okanogan and Chelan Counties	1300 5 th Street Wenatchee, WA 98801 Phone: (509) 682-6890 Website: http://wvc.ctc.edu
SkillSource WorkSource Affiliate Serving Okanogan County	233 N. Chelan Wenatchee, WA 98001 Toll Free: 1 (800) 999-8694 Phone: (509) 663-3091 Fax: (509) 663-5649 Website: http://www.skillsource.org
Tri-County Workforce Development Council	
WorkSource Kittitas County (Ellensburg) WorkSource Center Serving Kittitas County	PO Box 519 401 E. Mountain View Ellensburg WA 98926 Phone: (509) 925-5311 Fax: (509) 925-1004

WorkSource Yakima WorkSource Center Serving Yakima County	306 W. Division P.O. Box 12500 Yakima, WA 98909 Toll Free for Kittitas County: 1 (800) 834-6799 Phone: (509) 574-0105 TTY: (509) 574-0117 (Disabled Vet Rep.) TTY: (509) 574-0143 (Main) Fax: (509) 575-2720 Website: http://www.cw1stop.org
WorkSource Sunnyside WorkSource Center Serving Yakima County	1925 Morgan Rd. Sunnyside, WA 98944 Phone: (509) 836-5405 Fax: (509) 836-1129 TTY: (509) 836-1130
WorkSource Columbia Gorge (White Salmon) WorkSource Center Serving Klickitat and Skamania Counties	107 West Jewett Blvd White Salmon, WA 98672 Toll Free: (800) 511-7388 Phone: (509) 493-5020 Fax: (509) 493-5000
WorkSource Goldendale Affiliate	116 East Main Goldendale, WA 98620 Phone: (509) 773-5503
Eastern Washington Workforce Development Council	
Pullman WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Whitman County	350 S.E. Fairmont Rd., Suite 2 Pullman, WA 99163-5500 Phone: (509) 332-6549 Fax: (509) 338-4206
WorkSource Walla Walla WorkSource Center Serving Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla Counties	1530 Stevens Walla Walla, WA 99362 Phone: (509) 527-4393 TTY: (509) 527-1834 Fax: (509) 527-1800
Blue Mountain Action Council WorkSource Affiliate Serving Walla Walla County	342 Catherine St. Walla Walla, WA 99362 Phone: (509) 529-4980 Website: http://www.bmacww.org/

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Walla Walla Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Walla Walla County	500 Tausick Way Walla Walla, WA 99362 Phone: (509) 527-4215 Website: http://www.wallawalla.cc
Career Path Services (Colville) WorkSource Affiliate Serving Stevens County	522 South Main Colville, WA 99114 Phone: (509) 684-8859
Community Colleges of Spokane (Colville) WorkSource Affiliate Serving Stevens County	985 South Elm Colville, WA 99114 Phone: (509) 584-3138 Website: http://ccs.spokane.cc.wa.us
Colville WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Stevens, Ferry, Pend Oreille, and Lincoln Counties	956 S. Main, Suite B Colville, WA 99114 Toll Free: 1 (800) 451-1549 Phone: (509) 685-6158
DSHS/Community Services WorkSource Affiliate WorkSource Affiliate Serving Stevens County	1100 S. Main Colville, WA 99114 Phone: (509) 685-5600 Website: http://www.wa.gov/dshs
Clarkston CSO WorkSource Affiliate Serving Asotin County	1300 5 th St. Clarkston, WA 99403 Phone: (509) 758-4518
Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council	
WorkSource Columbia Basin WorkSource Center Serving Benton and Franklin Counties	815 N. Kellogg, suite D Kennewick, WA 99336 Phone: (509) 734-5900 Fax: (509) 734-5957
Spokane Workforce Development Council	
WorkSource Spokane WorkSource Center Serving Spokane County	130 S. Arthur Street Spokane, WA 99202 Phone: (509) 532-3190 Fax: (509) 532-3082 Website: http://www.workspokane.org

Career Path Services (Spokane) WorkSource Affiliate Serving Spokane County	905 N. Washington (at the Broadview Dairy) Spokane, WA 99201 Phone: (509) 326-7520 Fax: (509) 323-1244
Spokane Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Spokane County	1810 N. Greene Street Spokane, WA 99217-5399 Phone: (509) 533-7249 TTY: (509) 533-8080 Fax: (509) 533-8681 Website: http://www.scc.spokane.cc.wa.us
Center for School to Work WorkSource Affiliate Serving Spokane County	Educational Services District 101 1025 West Indiana Ave. Spokane, WA 99205-4400 Phone: (509) 456-7660 Fax: (509) 625-5215
Spokane Falls Community College WorkSource Affiliate Serving Spokane County	3410 W. Ft. George Wright Dr. Spokane, WA 99224 Phone: (509) 533-3682 Website: http://www.sfcc.spokane.cc.wa.us
Goodwill Industries WorkSource Affiliate Serving Spokane County	130 E. third Ave. Spokane, WA 99202 Phone: (509) 838-4246 Website: http://www.giin.org/

“Now, what do I do?”

For an ex-offender this is an all too familiar question, as you prepare to re-enter society!

Many realize the key to staying free and being successful in society is finding stable employment.

"But, how do I begin this journey?"

“What are some things that I will need to take care of before I begin my job search?”

Objectives:

- Learn that your job search is a personal, complex journey, which requires planning and coordination.
- Learn where you are in the job search process.
- Learn how to set goals.
- Learn job search techniques.
- Learn how to overcome barriers.

Overview:

Throughout this booklet we will be looking at the job search as a type of journey or trip, with everyone having the same destination: Finding an employer who is looking for someone like you. The three common routes for getting there will be 1) Knowing yourself, 2) Knowing the employer, and 3) Demonstrating the match between them. Success will be defined as “finding an employer who is looking for someone like you.”

Does any of this feel or sound familiar?

"I want to stay out when I'm released, but everywhere I go I hit roadblocks. Who's going to hire me anyway? Why should I even try if I'm just gonna wind up back here again?"

You don't have to come back...but you have to commit to work at staying out! Do you:

- Have a specific parole plan?
- Have a firm commitment from somebody for a job, education, training?
- Have some resources available (a little money, clothes, a place to stay) to make use of when you get out?
- Have friends or family to give you some support?

If not, you're not ready. **You have more work to do! !**

"But is help available when I leave here?"

Sure, there are agencies and people willing to help, either directly or by pointing out where you can go. But you have to be willing to help yourself, no one will do it for you! The key to getting help lies in **knowing** what you want and preparing yourself to get it.

"OK. then, how do I learn what I need?"

- Make a list of what you need.
- Ask others--inmates, counselors, teachers, friends, family, anybody who might have some information about what they know concerning available help. And don't overlook the value of letters, you can write and request the info you need.
- Check out the library, the chapel, the education department, institutional industries, etc., for what they might be able to provide.
- Update and revise your list according to what you're learning.

"So now, how do I find the help?"

If you have not made your contacts before leaving the institution, you may find it hard to get help once you are on the streets again. But finding help is easier after you decide what it is you need. **The four ways to find help are:** (1) look for information; (2) listen; (3) ask; and (4) take action from the help you receive to get your results.

Some suggestions:

- Get information about helping agencies. (In each telephone book, for example, there's usually one agency that can supply a list of all the local social service agencies. Call or write, and ask them to send you that list!)
- When you find out what's there--**contact them!!**
- Don't assume that people in one agency know about another agency's resources. Ask anyway!!

The more you know about your needs and about your resources for help, the better your chances of staying out. But learning that takes **work**. Contacting those sources takes **more work** (and some courage, too!) **Are you willing? You can learn not to return!**

What were you doing before incarceration or jail?

Were you working at the time? Yes () No ()

If yes, indicate: Employer _____

Job Title: _____

Full Time: () Part Time: () (Check one)

Length of Employment:

Years: Months:

Hourly Wage: or Salary:

If no, indicate last employer ever:

Employer _____

Job Title _____

Check all that apply:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| () <i>Did not like the job</i> | () <i>Like the job very much</i> |
| () <i>Wanted another job</i> | () <i>Job was just O.K.</i> |
| () <i>Hate all jobs</i> | () <i>Happy in the job</i> |
| () <i>Never wanted the job/bored</i> | () <i>Always wanted to work there</i> |

What three (3) things regarding employment have you missed while you have been incarcerated?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Have you dealt with Child Support issues while you've been incarcerated?

When you are in prison, your child support obligation does not go away; it will keep piling up, month after month, unless you act to change or modify the order. Modifying a child support order is the process of changing the amount of monthly support due under your order. It does not happen automatically, you have to put in a written request to make this happen. One of the grounds for modifying your support is a significant change in circumstances. Going to prison may qualify as a significant change in your circumstances. The Division of Child Support (DCS) can help you modify your child support order.

If you are unable to pay your child support while you are in prison, you will have a big debt waiting for you when you are released. This doesn't help your children. Your child support order should be based on your ability to pay. If you do not have an income, your order may be modified to reflect your current circumstances.

DCS cannot automatically modify your child support order when you are in prison. You must ask DCS to review and modify your order. Don't wait – the earliest that a modification can be effective is the date the petition to modify is filed, no matter how long ago your circumstances changed. Modifications are prospective only, which means DCS can't modify backwards, just for the future.

If you ask DCS to review and to modify your order, some forms will be sent to you to fill out. Complete and return these forms as soon as possible. Your child support will be set according to the Washington State Child Support Schedule. If you have no income while in prison, you may qualify for a "zero" order. If you have income and resources, you may be required to pay support even though you are in prison.

When you are released DCS will want to collect any child support you owe. It is a good idea to contact DCS right before your release so payment options can be discussed. When you get a job, you should contact DCS. If you do not DCS will most likely serve a 50% withhold on your wages and try to obtain other assets. If you contact DCS and tell them where you are working an arrangement for a payment plan that you can afford can usually be set up.

Under appropriate circumstances, DCS will consider charging off part or all of a support debt. Upon your release, contact DCS and ask for a "conference board".

When you write to DCS, use your name, Social Security Number, and your DCS case number (the IV-D) number. Also, include your DOC number so that their correspondence can get to you. DCS does not accept collect calls.

Send all DCS Correspondence to:

Division of Child Support
PO Box 11520
Tacoma, WA 98411-5520

Think about your options when you get out?

What are your three (3) greatest strengths?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

What will be your biggest problem upon release?

How will you solve this problem?

Do you have a promise of a job upon release? How solid is this promise?

If yes, indicate: Employer: _____

Job Title: _____

Full Time: () Part Time: ()

Length of Employment:

Years: () Months: () Seasonal: ()

Hourly Wage: _____ Salary: _____

Have you prepared yourself for release? *Check the items you currently have:*

- () Resume
- () Master Application
- () Prospective Employers List
- () Copies of Certificate and Degrees
- () Letters of Recommendation
- () Driver's License or State Issued Identification Card
- () Actual Social Security Card (not photocopy)
- () Birth Certificate or Certified Copy of same

Check all educational accomplishments achieved during your incarceration (like forklift, welding, construction trades).

- () GED
- () Vocational Certificates (please list)
- () Work experiences (on-the-job training)
- () Associate Degree (specify): _____
- () Bachelors Degree (specify): _____
- () Masters Degree (specify): _____
- () Other (specify): _____

Would you be willing to seek assistance through job/work related programs designed to help ex-offenders? Yes () No()

List any ex-offender assistance program(s) with which you are familiar.

Examples: Department of Vocation Rehabilitation,
WorkSource and Offender Employment Services

Ask yourself these questions and record your answers in the spaces provided.

Make a list of things you know you will need when you get home:

Make a list of resources you can use to get the help you need at home:

Setting goals for yourself

It is a fact that we are more likely to reach our goals if we know what they are and consciously work toward them. Someone once said, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else."

When setting goals use the **"5 P Rule"**, Goals need to be:

1. **Personal** You cannot set goals for anyone other than yourself, and no one else can set goals for you. You are the one who must accomplish those goals, so they must belong to you. That means you can set goals with another person, but not for them. Others can set goals with you but not for you. Otherwise, when the going gets tough, you will give up, because they are not your goals. You must be very clear on what you want, and what target you are aiming for so you can get there.
2. **Positive** Because of the way the human mind works, if you want to accomplish a positive goal, you must frame it in a positive way. Instead of saying; "I won't overeat ever again", frame your goal without negatives: "I discipline my eating, and quit when I am full."
3. **Present Tense** State your goal in the present rather than the future. Rather than saying; "I will, someday when I get around to it", say "I will now." Then you won't put it off.
4. **Powerful** Use a powerful emotional word as part of your goal setting. You are using your mind to put your body into action. Marshal your emotions, and you will have a powerful whole-body learning experience. "I love working with machinery because it is exciting to hear the powerful roar of a fine tuned engine."
5. **Practical** It is great to aim high, but be sure that the goal you have set your sights on is a realistic, attainable goal for you. Make it specific enough to measure whether you have done what you set out to do. Write down the goal and the steps that you need to take to accomplish it. Set a date to begin, so you don't procrastinate. Then do it!

Your mindset is the self-talk you are thinking to yourself.

What you say to yourself is usually translated into action, either, verbal or physical. Here are some thoughts that you may not have considered that can lead to positive attitude adjustment.

Thinking about goals, long-term and short-term:

- “My life is the result of my thoughts and deeds.”
- “I cannot achieve great success without hardships.”
- “The cost of a thing is the amount of life that must be exchanged for it.”
- “There isn’t any map on the road to success; you have to find your own way.”

Some obstacles are likely to appear that stop or slow progress:

- “Problems are opportunities in disguise.”
- “I eliminate all of the negatives.”
- “Fear and hate have no place in my thinking.”
- “I laugh a little each day.”
- “A person can fail many times, but they aren’t a failure until they begin to blame someone else.”
- “The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way a person uses them.”
- “The difference between success and failure is the refusal to quit when you are discouraged.”
- “Nothing is all wrong. Even a clock that has stopped running is right twice a day.”
- “When you are at the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on.”

Your goals will change with time, but you must always have a positive goal to reach for.

- “I persist until I win.”
- “Successful days make a successful life, one day at a time.”
- “99% of what we do, we do by habit.”
- “Character is a victory, not a gift.”
- “90% of life is attitude, 10% is action.”
- “In life try to get what you like otherwise you shall be forced to like what you get.”

What kinds of messages make up **your** "self talk," your "mindset"? How can you improve these? Where can you eliminate negatives? Where can you be more specific?

Setting short and long-term goals

In order to set goals, it is necessary to put them into specific, concrete terms. Here are some examples.

Long-term goal: To get training in order to get a job as a computer repairperson.
Find at least three employers in the appropriate geographic area with jobs that fit my skills.
Get an interview with at least two of these employers.
Get a job with one of these two employers.

Short-term goals (to accomplish long-term goal):

Identify a computer repair training program for which I am eligible.
Apply for entry into the program.
Find a way to finance the training and the necessary tools.
Find the means of transportation to get to the training.
Commit to attending the training for the entire training time.
Complete the program successfully.

Stating goals with clear and specific statements makes it easier to convert them into practical steps. Every step toward any goal must be do-able!

The second guideline related to preparing goals is to divide the short-term goals into mini-steps and to assign time lines to each.

The short-term goal: To identify a computer repair training program for which I am eligible can be broken into the following small steps to which responsibility and time lines are associated.

This is a small example of mini-steps to goal setting:

Call and make an appointment with (name and phone number) at Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); make an appointment to visit.

Make arrangements for transportation to the DVR Office ahead of time.

Go to appointment at DVR office on time.

Goals worksheet plan

Name _____

Date _____

Long-term goal:

Steps to reach my goal: What? When?

Short-term goal:

Steps to reach my goal: What? When?

Where do you see yourself? In the next two years?

In the next five years?

Job Search Technique

Although traditional job search techniques are not always the most successful way to obtain employment, you must have knowledge of this process when you begin your search. Usually job seekers are more successful applying directly to employers. With this approach, you can directly tell them your strengths, break stereotypes, and directly address the concerns of the employer.

Resources:

- Community Resources (WorkSource Centers, Community Colleges)
- Networking
- Telephone Book
- Newspapers
- Employment Agencies
- Internet/CareerNet

Job applications and resumes:

- Traditional training required?
- Explain time gaps
- Be straightforward
- List institutional work, training, education, accomplishments
- Answer the question: "Have you ever been convicted of a felony?"

Telephone skills:

- Call employers directly

Interview skills:

- Traditional interview skills training required
- Video tape and critique if possible
- Be honest
- Explain criminal record/charges if asked
- Present efforts of rehabilitation
- Present portfolio of accomplishments
- Reinforce why you are the one for the job

Name _____ Date _____

Barriers to Employment

The following problems may keep me from getting and keeping a job, if I don't take care of these requirements.

- ☐ I do not have a Driver's License or State I.D. card
- ☐ I need a copy of my driving record
- ☐ I need a certified copy of my Birth Certificate
- ☐ I do not have a Social Security Card
- ☐ I need clothes for work or interviewing
- ☐ I owe child support
- ☐ I need a copy of my military records or DD-214
- ☐ I am not sure if the job I want requires a vocational license
- ☐ I have credit problems
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Documentation Requirements

Are you legally ready to work?

Many ex-offenders do not possess the required documentation to begin work legally. Often they do not have copies of birth certificates, social security cards, state photo identification card, driver's license, or other important documents that are required to establish citizenship and their eligibility to work. Obtaining these documents not only prepares ex-offenders for the legal requirements of employment, but also connects them to the larger society where most already possess these papers.

The following are the kinds of documents typically required in the workplace:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Social Security Card: | Find your local office?
Go there as soon as possible |
| Birth Certificates: | Write to:
Department of Health/ Center of Health Statistics
PO Box 9709
Olympia, WA 98507-9709

Addresses for vital statistics list |
| Valid Driver's License or
Photo Identification: | Department of Licensing
Proof of Identity |
| Immigration Papers: | Authorization to work
"Green Card"
Passport |
| Certificates: | Union cards, etc
Diplomas, Certifications, Credentials |

Breaking Stereotypes: Dress for Success

As discussed earlier in this section, ex-offenders have barriers to overcome to obtain employment. A significant barrier is the public perception of "criminals" and the stereotypes associated with ex-offenders. This Pre-Employment and Job Readiness Program will do everything possible to prepare ex-offenders to look appropriate when they interview with perspective employers or begin employment. Further, the offender should make extra effort to look, dress and act like others already on the job. Wearing conservative clothes and hairstyles, and covering tattoos will soften your image and will go a long way towards success. Breaking stereotypes is the single most effective strategy you can use in your job search. An employer is more likely to hire you when you look like could fit into the workplace.

Many ex-offenders do not have the necessary clothing, hairstyles, or "look" to enter the workforce. Community agencies, churches, clothing banks, thrift stores and other resources will be helpful. Mostly, you need to know how to make a positive first impression.

- Dressing for success: Dress for the job, dress conservatively
- Self-advertising: Your one-minute commercial, job applications, resumes, and "Quick" cards
- First impressions: Smile, eye contact, handshake
- Hygiene issues: Hair style, finger nails, body odor, clean shaven
- Purchase of work clothes, tools and other start-up necessities: Clothing banks, churches, social service agencies; thrift stores, loans

Why Hire an Ex-Offender or Offender?

As an offender or ex-offender, you are your own best advocate. Focus on why an employer should consider you for employment. There are many good reasons to hire an offender or ex-offender. Once you know how to handle the difficult question, you will be more effective in your job search.

Employer incentives for hiring an ex-offender

- Washington State Bonding Program - you are bondable for free!
- Continued supervision, Urinalysis, etc
- Employer fully aware of offender's status
- Employer has staff of Probation Office for assistance
- Contributes to his/her community
- Punctual, dependable employee
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit eligibility

Identify your life values that are important to your future success and well being.

Check 10 of these values that are most important to you.

- _____ Being an honest person
- _____ A long and healthy life
- _____ A good marriage relationship
- _____ An enjoyable, leisurely life
- _____ Being known as a “real” person
- _____ A meaningful love relationship
- _____ Some honest, close friendships
- _____ A financially comfortable life
- _____ A secure and positive family life
- _____ Accomplishing something worthwhile
- _____ Owning a possession of great value
- _____ A meaningful relationship with god
- _____ Equal opportunities for all people
- _____ Freedom to live your life as you want
- _____ Continuing to learn and gain knowledge
- _____ A life with meaning/purpose, fulfillment
- _____ Positive self-confidence and personal growth
- _____ A physical appearance you can be proud of
- _____ A chance to help the sick and disadvantaged
- _____ Enjoyment of nature and beauty (in any form)
- _____ A beautiful home in the setting of your choice
- _____ A chance to develop your creativity or potential in chosen areas
- _____ Satisfaction or success in the career you choose
- _____ Unlimited travel, fine foods, entertainment, recreational
and cultural opportunities

There is a life for you beyond the joint. Who will you become on the outside? Believing and realizing your dreams and values doesn't happen by magic. It's a consequence of your own effort, energy, and invested time to achieve them. At that point you can claim the confidence and pride of having earned your own satisfaction.

Why I am better off working

Read the following seven reasons why you are better off employed than unemployed. All of the reasons may mean something to you as you read them but one will probably seem more important than the others will.

Think about each reason and decide which two are the most important reasons for you to be employed.

1. Employment would help me develop a greater sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-esteem.
2. Having a job means I could make a positive contribution to the community.
3. I would be a better role model for my family and children by being employed.
4. I would become more independent and in control of my own life.
5. Employment would help me develop my natural abilities and discover my talents.
6. A job would give my family and me a greater sense of security and well being.
7. I would have a better opportunity to gain financial prosperity and success if I had a job.

Write your choices below and describe why these are important as you enter the workforce:

Successes vs. Failures

Successful People	Unsuccessful People
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect failure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think they can	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't want to try
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try whole-heartedly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try half-heartedly
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fake it till they make it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believe that lack of confidence is proof that they will fail
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand failure is a necessary ingredient to learning how to succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blame others for their lack of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believe that they have control of their lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feel powerless
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believe problems are temporary challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give up when the going gets tough
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take responsibility for their successes and their mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deny any responsibility

It is your choice where your journey will take you.

The difference between success and failure is a choice. While some accept what they get, others will not and try to earn what they want. It's much easier to give up than to do what it takes to achieve. The time, energy and effort to accomplish add the value to anything meaningful in life.

There is always another chance for those who will not give up. It's true everyone willing to make the honest commitment to contribute to society as a citizen, and the economy as a worker earns their second chance. Decide what this may mean to you? This choice has made the difference in the lives of millions.

The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the job market, whose face is marred by dust and sweat. Be one who knows the enthusiasm, the great devotion, and spend themselves on a worthy cause that produces. Who at best if they win knows the thrill of high achievement and if they fail at least fails while daring greatly so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls, who know neither victory nor defeat.

Your work related values influence how you feel about your job.

You need to know your values as you begin to look for a job. To be satisfied with your work, you should choose a job that matches your work values as closely as possible.

Get a job you want to do, you'll never mind showing up everyday, you'll be happy, and the paychecks are icing on the cake.

Objectives:

- Learn about job seeker's interests and preferred ways of learning.
- Learn how job seekers make decisions.
- Learn how self-knowledge contributes to a successful job search.

Overview:

Job seekers are continually faced with change and choices. Learning "who you are" can affect how you plan, control, and shape your life. Participate in this interactive section to gain new and exciting information about yourself.

One of the first steps in the job search is to be clear about who you are. In other words, what is it that you are marketing to an employer? Participating in this section will examine your interests, learning styles and evaluate their ability to establish and commit to a goal. You will learn how to combine all of this information to design a more effective job search.

Following is a list of work values for you to consider as you begin your job search. Rate each item on a scale of not important to very important. Then review your list to see which items you feel strongly about. Pay close attention to the list as you set your goals. Your values relate directly to the working conditions in each company or occupation you research.

How important are these work-related values to you?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Very Important
Salary				
Status and Prestige				
Travel Opportunities				
Leisure Time				
Power and Influence				
Competition				
Being Around People				
Blending Family and Career				
Variety and Change in Work				
Involvement in Decision-Making				
Security				
Public Contact				
Recognition				
Flexible Work Schedule				
Regular 40-Hour Work Week				
Mental Challenge				
Independence				
Benefits				
Quality of Products/Services				
Freedom from Pressure/Stress				
Clear Expectations				
Clear Rules				

Identify Strengths and Limitations

Any job, in any organization will give you knowledge and skills that will be valued by future employers. Working in any organization can make you so used to doing tasks in a certain way, that you will have to relearn how to perform in another organization. Even the terms or words you frequently use will be different. For example, the use of military, or jail lingo will need to be re-learned to speak in plain English before an employer will understand you.

This section addresses the specific strengths and limitations of your work experience. As you read this section, think about all of your life experiences and what you can do to capitalize on your strengths and overcome these limitations.

Strengths

Your experiences in life have probably given you a lot of work experiences that will be useful to many employers. Your task is to consider your own work and find a way to use the information to your best advantage. Following is a list of some strengths you probably have acquired in your life and work experiences. As you read the list, on a separate sheet of paper make notes about your own experiences. You will use the notes later in preparing your resume to emphasize traits that an employer is looking for.

1. **Leadership--** You may have had responsibility for others and their activities. You are trained to lead by setting an example and by giving directions.
2. **Ability to conform to rules and structure--** In any organization there must be rules and structure to avoid chaos. Companies value employees who will follow the rules and fit into the structure of the work place.
3. **Ability to learn with advanced training--** You may have received intensive training, and often specialized or advanced training, that gives you expertise in a certain field.
4. **Familiarity with records--** You are familiar with the need for keeping records and completing paperwork. You understand the need to be accountable for everything you do.
5. **Ability to work as a team member and a team leader--** You understand that everything you do affects someone else. You may have been in a position to serve as a team leader where you analyze situations and options, made decisions, gave directions, followed through and accepted responsibility.
6. **Able to work with in a diverse group--** Ability to work with all race, gender, economic status, age, religion, intelligence. You are able to work with people from all backgrounds, attitudes, and characteristics.

7. **Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines--** You do the job right the first time. There is pressure and stress; if you fail, people could suffer. This attitude toward work is valued in the business community. Do what it takes to get the results.
8. **Systematic planning--** You are able to consider objectives, the strengths, and limitation of others, resources, time schedules, logistics and various factors. You also assess progress during the operation. The ability to plan and attention to details is highly valued in the business community.
9. **Emphasis on safety--** You understand the cost of lives, property, and objectives when safety is ignored. An emphasis on safety will often be valued. Certification or knowledge of first aid and/or CPR is desired for preparedness by any organization for disaster or injuries.
10. **Ability to give and follow directions--** You know how to work under supervision. You are accountable for your actions and follow through. Being disciplined in your life and when dealing with others is important in the work place.

Limitations

1. **Disqualifying Crimes--** There are crimes that will disqualify a person from working jobs with vulnerable adults, individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness, and children, which are called disqualifying crimes and can be found in the Washington State Laws RCW 43.43.830 and RCW 43.43.842. The complete listing is on page 56 for your knowledge and review. Employers may also have written policies disqualifying job applicants from employment for any convictions of manufacture, possession, and/or delivery of controlled substances depending on the nature of their business.
2. **Communication--** You might have learned to use acronyms, military talk, jail lingo, or jargon but most people will not understand you. You must consciously think about using words that will be understood in the work place that you are applying for.
3. **Stress--** You have learned to work under pressure and have dealt with stressful situations. In the workforce, people sometimes get laid off with nothing more than a written notice with their paycheck. Job search can produce stress and change and uncertainty will usually always produce stress. Stress is a normal part of our lives. We can't avoid it and it can either be a negative or a positive.
4. **Money--** You may have a few weeks or even months without work. It may take months to find the right job. You will need to save money, figure out how much money you will need, and develop a budget. Applying for food stamps will help maintain your nutrition and energy level. Even though a good job search strategy

will reduce the time you spend unemployed, you will still need to budget and conserve resources.

5. **Stereotypes--** Being aware of stereotypes up front will help you break them down when you encounter them. Watch out for the stereotypes **you** have of others, too!

Some stereotypes of the ex-offender:

- Untrustworthy
- Addict
- Unemployable
- Gang member
- Tattoos and body piercing
- Bad attitude
- Poor me, blaming, self pity
- Violent, aggressive

Unrealistic expectations-- Frequently someone who has been out of the work world may have expectations too high for the jobs available and that they are qualified for. You may have to consider taking less pay for an opportunity to prove yourself in a new line of work. Flexibility to take the best job offer obtainable will afford stability from a steady income. The reality of the modern job market is that you'll need to continue job searching, while working full or part time, for a better job offer.

Develop a Personal Stress Management Plan

1. Recognize the stresses surrounding your job search and personal life.
Try to identify some of the feelings you experience and different ways in which you can adjust.
2. Develop a job search plan.
 - Commit to your plans.
 - Review the results weekly, and make needed adjustments.
 - Don't take minor rejections too seriously.
 - Much of the stress you may experience when looking for work will diminish as your plan comes together. You will feel a sense of relief and gradually begin to gain back the control over your life that you feel was lost.
3. Structure your time and practice time management.
 - Begin your day by organizing your task.
 - Focus your total concentration on the task at hand, one task at a time.
 - Do not allow other people to waste your time.
 - Focus your total concentration on the task at hand

4. Start and maintain an exercise and nutrition regimen.
 - Engage yourself in fun activities and exercise your mind and body.
 - Follow a healthy eating plan with plenty of healthy foods.
 - Avoid alcohol and drugs.
5. Maintain your religious beliefs, social or family customs and daily routines.
6. Learn and use relaxation techniques.
7. Develop and maintain support systems.
 - Surround yourself with positive people.
 - Help others. Volunteer your time.
 - Join a support group.
8. Schedule time for yourself.
 - Your job search is not personal time; it is your current job. Allow time to reward yourself for accomplishments.
9. Communicate openly and honestly with others.
6. Establish a life plan and career goal.
7. Include humor and laughter in your life. Even smiling relieves stress levels.

Check your stress

Place a check mark next to each statement that applies to you.

1. ___ I sleep 7-8 hours most every night.
2. ___ I am able to manage my time well.
3. ___ I drink fewer than 5 alcoholic beverages a week.
4. ___ I give and receive affection regularly.
5. ___ I exercise 3 times a week.
6. ___ My income is adequate to meet my basic needs.
7. ___ I have a network of friends and acquaintances.
8. ___ I am in good health (including eyes, hearing, and teeth).
9. ___ I am able to speak about my feelings when angry or worried.

- 10. ____ I have conversations with people I live with about chores, money etc.
- 11. ____ I regularly participate in social or other activities.
- 12. ____ I do something for fun at least once a week.
- 13. ____ I have at least one friend or relative nearby on whom I can rely.
- 14. ____ I eat a well balanced diet.
- 15. ____ I am close to the appropriate weight for my height.
- 16. ____ I drink less than 4 caffeine beverages a day.
- 17. ____ I get an adequate amount of quiet time for myself during the day.
- 18. ____ I have a plan or methods to better manage the stress in my life.

Total number of checks _____

If there are 7 or less you might not be doing all you can to reduce or manage stress in your life. Review the list and identify one or two that you can add each week to help improve your health at a very stressful time in your life.

Skills and Personal Qualities

What you have to offer an employer is a crucial part in what job or occupation that you pursue.

Remember the work you have done in the institution include transferable skills that can be used in future jobs.

In the space below list 8-10 achievements that you are really proud of. This list can come from school memories, employment, or as far as you can remember. Also, list the skills and personal qualities you developed from these achievements.

I am proud that....

Skills & personal qualities I needed....

"What are my Work Preferences and Interests?"

A successful job hunt begins by really knowing yourselves and what you enjoy doing.

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are also referred to as "hire me" skills since every employer desires them. So named because they are skills that transfer from one type of work to another. Most adults have actually developed over 500 specific skills. Unfortunately, job seekers are only able to discuss 5-8 during an interview.

This section will help you identify your transferable skills which employers seek most. Being able to identify transferable skills will build confidence in the skills you possess, enhance your resume and application, and increase your effectiveness during the job interview process.

Objectives:

- Identify transferable skills and personal qualities that job seekers feel comfortable presenting to an employer.
- Provide written evidence of these skills and qualities in a form that could be presented directly to an employer.
- Learn to identify skills a job seeker can market to an employer.
- Identify specific occupations that utilize job seeker's transferable skills and personal qualities.

Overview:

Skills and abilities are the building blocks of job success. Learn to identify, demonstrate and package with confidence the skills and personal qualities today's employers' desire.

The new economy requires workers who can transfer skills from one work setting to another, and who have the kinds of personal qualities that make organizations successful. Successful job seekers must know how to identify these skills and qualities within themselves, and be able to describe and demonstrate them in ways that have meaning to employers. Participants in this section will learn how to identify and demonstrate a variety of skills and personal qualities desired by employers. They will be able to package their skills in a way that will communicate their desirability to employers.

Transferable skills and character traits list

Based on your work experience, volunteer experience, military experience, educational experience and total life experience, place a check mark next to the skills that you possess. Next, circle skills and character traits that you believe are your strongest. Now list the words on a separate sheet of paper and write an example to show that you possess those skills. These will be your transferable skills you will want to feature on your application, resume, and in the interview responses.

<u>Leadership</u> Competitive Decisive Delegate Direct others Explain things to others Initiate new tasks Make decisions Mediate problems Motivate people Negotiate agreements Planning Result-oriented Take risks Conduct meetings Self-confident Solve problems Generate Ideas <u>Creative/Artistic</u> Artistic Drawing Expressive Perform, act Present artistic ideas <u>Using hands</u> Assemble things Build things Construct/repair buildings Dismantled Drive, operate vehicles Fabricated Loaded Operating tools, machines Repair things Typed	<u>Working with people</u> Aided Administer Answered questions Attended/Assisted others Counsel others Demonstrate Instruct Listen Negotiate Patient Persuade Supervise Tactful Teaching Tolerant Trusting Tutored Understanding <u>Key skills</u> Coordinated tasks Instructing others Implement Managing resources Managing people Meeting deadlines Serving the public Negotiating Organizing projects Performed Processed Provided Scheduled Served Supervised Transported	<u>Dealing with data</u> Analyze data Audit records Budgeting Calculate/compute Compile Detail oriented Document research Evaluate Investigate Keep financial records Locate information Manage money Posted Programmed Proofread Record facts Take inventory <u>Using words</u> Articulate well Communicate verbally Correspond with others Create new ideas Design Develop/create Encouraged Edit Greeted Justified Presented Promoted Published Speak publicly Teamwork Telephoned Write clearly
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Determine Your Work Preferences

This exercise helps you to identify vocational interests, personal style and work preferences. For example, your interests should be related to the jobs that you decide to pursue. Your values should not conflict with the occupation you choose. Complete this survey to identify your work preferences. Think about your work preferences and circle all the responses that best complete the phrase for you.

1. I enjoy working with:
 - ☐ data (information, words, numbers)
 - ☐ people
 - ☐ things (machines, equipment)
2. I prefer working:
 - ☐ indoors
 - ☐ outdoors
 - ☐ some inside and some outside
3. I would like to work for a company:
 - ☐ with less than 100 employees
 - ☐ with 100 to 500 employees
 - ☐ with 500 or more employees
 - ☐ that is family owned
4. I would like to work in a:
 - ☐ large city
 - ☐ medium city
 - ☐ town or suburban area
 - ☐ small town or rural area
5. I want a job that requires:
 - ☐ interacting with a lot of people
 - ☐ some interaction with people
 - ☐ very little human interaction
 - ☐ no interaction with people
6. I would like work duties that:
 - ☐ frequently change
 - ☐ vary from day to day
 - ☐ are fairly routine
 - ☐ never change
7. I am willing to work overtime:
 - ☐ as much as possible
 - ☐ frequently
 - ☐ occasionally
 - ☐ never

8. For the right job I am:

- ☐ eager to relocate
- ☐ willing to relocate
- ☐ not able to relocate
- ☐ not willing to relocate

9. I prefer a job that involves:

- ☐ a lot of travel
- ☐ some travel
- ☐ no travel

10. I want to work

- ☐ full time
- ☐ part time
- ☐ temporary

11. List 5 things you like to do in your spare time?

12. What are your hobbies?

13. Are you more comfortable as a team member or a team leader?

14. Which of your past jobs did you like least? Why?

15. Which job did you like best? Why?

16. What kind of job would you do if you could choose any job?

"How Will I Know Where to Look for Work?"

"How will I know if the organization I'm interested in working for will be a good fit for me?"

Gain the instincts to feel where you may fit into a teamwork environment.

"I was looking for a job when I found this one. Why stop now, I know there are plenty of better jobs out there."

Objectives:

- Learn the importance of conducting labor market and employer research.
- Learn to use a variety of sources and tools to obtain labor market information.
- Learn how to conduct an informational interview.
- Learn to use labor market research resources.

Overview:

Before beginning an important journey, savvy travelers conduct research to "get a feel" for the area they will visit. Successful job seekers do the same thing. They know their skills and try to determine the type of workplace that uses these. This is called researching the labor market, which is the topic for this section.

Labor or job market research simply means getting a picture of the economy and workplace. Which businesses and other hiring organizations are in the area? What kind of work do they do? How do they hire? Which employers are most likely to be looking for someone like you? This section will help you answer these questions.

Career Exploration

The closer the match between a job and your work preferences, financial needs, and transferable skills, the more likely you will be successful and happy in that job. Remember to search for the perfect job. But keep in mind, it is rare to find a perfect match in a job.

The following is a list of ways you can do career exploration:

- Library research
- Volunteer for an organization
- Employment Counseling
- Read business magazines
- Attend training or apprenticeship programs
- Talk to friends and relatives about their work and careers
- Network with people you get to meet
- Informational interviews
- Job share
- Internships
- Job shadow
- Small Business Administration
- Employment agencies
- WorkSource Center
- Chamber of Commerce
- Better Business Bureau

Identify Specific Jobs

Now identify specific jobs you are interested in researching and pursuing.

Step 1: List 3 jobs that interest you and write the job titles below.

Step 2: Research the salary range and necessary qualifications and skills. Compare these to your financial needs, transferable skills, and education.

Step 3: Reality check yourself. Are the jobs you've identified available where you live? Are the jobs within a reasonable commute of one hour or less? For the jobs you want to get are you willing to relocate? Do you have the means and resources to move to where the jobs are available? Will the jobs pay for your cost-of-living, like housing, utilities, and transportation where you will live?

To overlook the above research can set an individual up for failure. The time and effort to study the labor market will pay off in numerous ways by setting realistic expectations, goals, planning and using your resources to your advantage.

Researching Your Job Market

Successful job seekers take a focused approach to finding work: centered, narrow, strong. It is a planned approach that involves:

- Knowing your skills and what kinds of businesses use those skills.
- Studying employers.
- Using networking to contact employers.
- Contacting the person who does the hiring.
- Showing your skills to that employer, so that they know you can meet their needs.

Labor market study also lets you know what jobs are open in your area, and where to find them.

- What are the jobs that you are skilled to do?
- Which employers hire people with your skills and abilities?
- What needs do the employers have in your area that you could fill?
- How do these employers hire?

Finding the answers to these questions will make time you put into your job search much more useful.

Begin the research trail: There are many resources that give company listings and facts about them. Use these lists to find out what is taking place in your desired line of work, as well as facts about employers. You can also use these lists to find employers you want to contact for job openings or to find out more about their business.

Useful resources:

- **WorkSource Centers** – will have a wealth of local job market information, who major employers are, new employers to the area, and access to resources for in-depth research of other labor markets statewide. Ask to learn and use the WorkForce Explorer Internet site.
- **Local phone books** - especially yellow pages and business section, and blue pages.
- **The Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council** - has listings that describe member business in the area.
- **The local library** - contains resources including:
 - **Local Union & Trade Organizations**
 - **Local business Journals** and report on businesses in the area
 - **Lead Source Directories** - list of local businesses by zip code.
 - **Dunn & Bradstreet** lists of manufacturers, corporate management and transportation companies (also available on the Internet).
- **The Internet** - job boards and individual company web pages.

Effective Job Search Strategies

It's a job to get a job, and requires the same dedicated time, energy, and effort to succeed. Your personal investment equates to future earnings.

The most successful method for obtaining the job you want is a planned, coordinated approach where you know yourself, know the local employers, and can demonstrate the match to convince an employer to hire you.

All of your good results from job searching are earned, and perseverance is required to endure rejection and find success.

Job hunting is a lifestyle you adopt to thrive in the modern economy. Never be satisfied with the job you start with. Stay ahead of the next pink slip; go for better jobs, pay, and benefits. Achieve consistent stability and satisfaction by continually looking and competing for better opportunities using the education and experiences you gain.

Objectives:

- Increase efforts at self-marketing to develop more job leads, contact more employers, leading to more job interviews.
- Learn what constitutes an effective job search.
- Develop the ability to evaluate and modify your work search habits.

Overview:

The workplace is always changing. Large companies are reorganizing and downsizing. Small businesses are hiring, and technology is everywhere in this new economy. Employers often want more than a single set of skills or experiences. They seek "personalities" who can perform many different tasks and contribute to the overall organization. Successful job seekers will be individuals who can demonstrate that they are a good fit for the organization, and not just someone who is looking for a job. To have an effective job search, you must:

- Know how employers hire and what crimes can disqualify you from certain jobs.
- Know what you have to offer; this means knowing and being able to describe your skills and abilities to market or sell yourself.
- Know what skills and abilities are being sought in your labor market; this means researching employers.
- Develop a work search plan that includes all the above information along with all the required personal documentation required to accept a job offer.
- Practice and modify your plan, as needed; this means checking it regularly to see if it is working, and making all necessary changes to be as competitive as you can be.

The following crimes are considered to disqualify any job applicant from working for any employer where the job has unsupervised access to children, individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness, or vulnerable adults statewide. Consider these limits as you start your job hunt.

Disqualifying Crimes Against Persons as Listed in Washington State Law

See RCW 43.43.830 and RCW 43.43.842

Aggravated murder	Kidnapping 2nd degree
Arson 1st degree	Malicious harassment
Assault in 1st degree	Manslaughter in 1st degree
Assault in 2nd degree	Manslaughter in 2nd degree
Assault in 3rd degree	Murder in 1st degree
Assault in 4th degree (3 or more years)	Murder in 2nd degree
Burglary 1st degree	Patronizing a juvenile prostitute
Child abandonment	Promoting pornography
Child neglect as defined in RCW 26.44.020	Promoting prostitution 1st degree
Child buying or selling	Prostitution (3 or more years)
Child molestation 1st degree	Rape 1st degree
Child molestation 2nd degree	Rape 2nd degree
Child molestation 3rd degree	Rape 3rd degree
Communication with a minor for immoral purposes	Rape of a child 1st degree
Criminal abandonment	Rape of a child 2nd degree
Criminal mistreatment 1st degree	Rape of a child 3rd degree
Criminal mistreatment 2nd degree	Robbery 1st degree
Custodial assault	Robbery 2nd degree
Custodial interference 1st degree	Selling or distributing erotic material to minor
Custodial interference 2nd degree	Sexual exploitation of minors
Extortion 1st degree	Sexual misconduct with a minor 1st degree
Extortion 2nd degree	Sexual misconduct with a minor 2nd degree
Extortion 3rd degree	Theft 1st degree
Felony indecent exposure	Theft 2nd degree (5 or more years)
Forgery (5 or more years)	Theft 3rd degree (3 or more years)
Incest	Unlawful imprisonment
Indecent liberties	Vehicular homicide (negligent homicide)
Kidnapping 1st degree	Violation of a child abuse restraining order

These crimes may be renamed in the future. The crimes listed above and **highlighted with bold** allow the employer to hire the applicant as long as the conviction date has been established to be 3 or 5 years prior to job application. All other listed crimes are disqualifying from employment without time limit.

Selling Yourself

Before you start job search, it's important to be aware of your strengths as a working individual. Think of yourself as a product to market. You have an assortment of marketable qualities, but unless you can communicate them to an employer effectively, they will go unrecognized. You must know who you are and why you're special and unique in order to sell yourself. You have to believe in yourself.

As you've worked your way through this book you've been asked to analyze yourself. Now answer the following questions, with a better understanding of who you are, and what kind of job and career you would most like to get. You will also have an idea of what skills you possess to effectively communicate them to an employer convincingly. This is vital to demonstrate the match of what you have to what the employer needs.

- What kind of working environment do you like?

- What kinds of values are most attractive to you: wealth, glamour, status, variety, stability, achievement, recognition, and creativity?

- Do you prefer working with people? Data? Ideas? Things? A combination of these? In what order of preference?

The term "skills" is often misunderstood. Skills are often thought of as a trade. But in the broader sense the word means activities which you are good at, or enjoy doing, and you have a number of skills.

- What are the things you do well?

- What do you enjoy doing the most?

- What do you think is your strongest skill?

- Are you making a list of all these valuable skills you have?

Now you've begun to think in positive terms. By presenting yourself to an employer in terms of positive skills, it's easier to sell yourself to get a job offer.

Anytime you apply for a job, you'll be asked about your previous work experiences. It's really important to be able to explain what you have done, not in terms of job titles, but a full description of your responsibilities and accomplishments.

- What jobs have you enjoyed the most? Why?

- What responsibilities and skills were necessary to do these jobs?

- Which skills and responsibilities do you think an employer will value the most? Why?

Your spare-time activities can give a great deal of information about you. Don't ignore hobbies. The things you have done outside of work are important indications of skills and interests. What hobbies have helped you gain skills and abilities?

The amount and type of education you have received will obviously make a difference in the jobs you will eventually get. List all of the education experiences you have had. What kinds of skills and abilities did you learn? Why and how would these skills and abilities be important to an employer?

The more time you take to identify the traits you have to sell to an employer increase your potential value as an employee. Demonstrating a track record of having learned how to learn is highly desirable for an employer to realize you can be trained to do the job the way they want it done in a short period. Persuading an employer that you can quickly contribute to produce as part of the business will help increase the business's competitiveness and profitability and is usually the bottom line on selection of new employees. How will your skills and abilities contribute to the success of a business or company?

Your One Minute Commercial

One of the most effective job hunting strategies is face-to-face contact directly with employers. Be prepared to deliver a to-the-point statement about the five most important things you want employers to know about you, and it's not that you have a criminal record.

Introduce yourself by stating the positives from your work history, transferable skills, or educational achievements. Say that "I can do...." or "I have been commended for...." or, how about, "I have experience in...." The point to make is that you are a good match for what this employer may need. You want to make a good impression and say why they should consider hiring you as someone who can produce for their business.

To be effective in your presentation it requires lots of practice on your commercial and the more you practice you'll find that it genuinely expresses your desire to talk more directly with an employer about potential jobs. Consider your one-minute commercial

as an introduction or icebreaker for you and an employer to find out more about each other. Once you have the opportunity to speak in-depth about yourself in an interview you'll be prepared to deal with issues about a criminal record.

Write your one-minute commercial below, then practice saying it out loud. Then re-write it until it's smooth and honest about who you are and what you can do of value for an employer. Remember, to make an effective One Minute Commercial you have to picture a specific job title or type of work in your head.

You can't really practice this enough when you only have one chance to make a good impression. As you practice you'll gain more confidence in your delivery so you won't choke up during an introduction or interview situation. Believe in who you are and what you have to offer and put those feelings into your words and deeds. Be genuine and honest in what you say, if not you're only fooling yourself. Now you have a commercial that is appealing and effective.

Job Search Planning

Now begin your job search and get organized!

List your goals and objectives (short and long term). Develop a plan and a schedule to reach those goals and objectives and stick to them as much as possible. Be flexible – you may need to rework them occasionally.

List all possible sources of assistance, potential employers and other resources so that you have something to refer to when you need help. Keep a folder for all the job search informational materials that you acquire.

There are documentation requirements to accept a job offer that are unavoidable in the modern economy so you must be prepared before you start hunting. Current immigration laws impact all employers and job hunters throughout the United States. To get a job you will need to understand the Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities (the 3 R's) of the system.

1. The Rule is: Approved forms of picture identification and eligibility documentation are required to be legally eligible for employment. The most common form of picture identification is a driver's license or state issued identification card for non-drivers. The most common form of eligibility documentation for employment is an original Social Security Card.
2. Your Role is: To provide you prospective employer with original documents that verify who you are (picture identification) and your citizenship status (social security card, and eligibility documentation for non-citizens).
3. Your Responsibility is: To identify and communicate your needs specific to the documentation required. Notify your Classification Counselor or Pre-Release Program staff that you need to get an original social security card or picture identification, and immigration documents for non-citizens. Making your needs known prior to release means you are ready to accept any job when offered to you.

Job Getting Strategies (listed in order of success rates):

- Planned and researched approach provided in the Job Hunter workshop series (86% success rate).
- Partnering with a group of other job hunters (Job Clubs), as part of a team you can contact more employers covering a wider area or labor market and share the information with the group where the jobs are (84% success rate).
- Do the legwork yourself making in-person contacts with the local employers who hire individuals with your skills (69% success rate).
- Contact employers that are of interest to you (47% success rate).
- Establishing a "people" network and asking for job leads. This includes associating with employees already working where they may "hang out" after work, or in a social setting where you can get to know more people (33% success rate).

- Using temporary (no fee) employment agencies. You develop skills and build job leads, which can lead to a permanent job (29% success rate).
- Using the Internet to identify, research and contact employers (25% success rate).
- Checking jobs posted at the local WorkSource Center (14% success rate).
- Using local newspaper want ads (12% success rate).
- Day labor pools where employers pick out workers (8% success rate).
- Mass mailing resumes (7% success rate).
- Using a private (for fee) employment agency (5% success rate).

As you can see the strategies of job search vary widely in effectiveness and you should use a combination of strategies as needed to achieve success, find what works for you and where you live. Finding a good job really depends on your preparation, determination, and perseverance. It's not easy but always pays off.

You're Hired! Job hunting is now your job where you will spend 30 to 40 hours per week engaged in your strategies, and certainly the more time you invest in your effort will be evident in your result. What you put into it, you'll get out of it, how much is your future going to be worth?

Time Management

Time is a precious commodity you must use entirely to your advantage. Plan your days as though you had a job. Set a rigid schedule to begin your job search activities each day and get to work on time everyday. Start using a weekly calendar listing all your goals to accomplish that week. Track each place you submit a resume or application and for what job. Note the names of everyone you meet, hand an application or resume to, where and how to contact them to follow up for more assistance. Remembering people's names and how to reach them is so important to build your contact network and a personal rapport where they get to know you and what jobs you are hunting. Reviewing back over your weekly calendar pages is a useful way to see if your efforts are bringing you closer to success. You'll spot trends and see which of your strategies is gaining the best results and where to concentrate more of your time and effort.

Networking with Others

People are your most valuable resource on your job hunt, especially the people in your support and job contact networks. Your job search network are those individuals who get to know you and become familiar with your motivation to get a good job and make a decent life. These are people whose trust you have earned through mutual rapport based on respect and honesty. Remember, you may be unemployed to start, but you still have a job. . . . looking for work, and it works both ways. In the near future you can become a job network contact for another. Very often you'll find it's not what you know, but whom you know that really counts. Finding where and with whom you fit makes all the difference and networking with others is how it's done.

Who to network with for support and assistance

Individual Contacts	More Individual Contacts	Groups
Family	People you meet at the coffee shop	Personnel departments
Friends	People you meet on the bus	Job Clubs and WorkSource Centers
Friends of friends and family	Clergy	Chamber of Commerce lists
Employers	Attorneys	Rehab support groups
Former Employers	Accountants	Social Clubs
Former Co-workers	Mail Carriers	Civic groups
Former classmates	Grocery Clerks	Sport leagues
Members of your church	Barbers	Veteran groups
People who provide services you use	Informational interviews	Community and Trade shows

Always thank your network contacts and let them know what happened as a result of their leads. Keep them up-to-date about your job hunt, especially when you have good news to share. When you do get hired give a special thank you for the job lead.

Step by Step Job Getting Mechanics

To develop more job leads, I will:

1. Ask friends and relatives about job openings and companies that do "my kind" of work.
2. Ask my former employer(s) about openings and companies that do my kind of work.
3. Check newspapers for job openings and plant expansions.
4. Ask employers I interview with about job openings they might know of with other employers.
5. Use the Employment Security Department/WorkSource Centers.
6. Check with the Civil Service office (Federal, State County, City) government about openings that I may qualify for.
7. Work with school placement office of (name of Trade School, College, High School).

8. Check professional, trade and business magazines for openings that I may qualify for.
9. Contact local unions and apprenticeship programs.
10. Contact self-help organizations.

When contacting employers I will:

1. File applications whenever they are being accepted.
2. Contact the personnel or Human Resources office.
3. Always state the specific job(s) I am applying for or seeking, (e.g. secretary, warehouse etc.).
4. Make my contacts in person.
5. Use a letter of application (to reply to an ad when the ad so requests, to follow-up on a lead only if you cannot make a visit, to "cover" your resume when you are applying for a specific job opening).
6. Use letters of inquiry when no specific opening is known, but when I am interested in working for a particular company.
7. Use the telephone (to reply to an ad only if the ad so requests)
8. Items to take with me (a sample application; copies of my resume, letters of references; license; verification of apprenticeships.)

When Interviewing for a Job, I will:

1. Know something about the company, it's products and services. You can find out from friends who work there; from the WorkSource Center, from the library, reference books, magazines, trade journals and newspapers.
2. Be prepared to state the job title I am applying for (e.g., secretary, warehouse worker, etc.), and why you think the company should select you for the job.
3. Remember the interviewer's name, and address him/her by name during the interview.
4. Thank the employer for the opportunity to interview and always ask when you can call back for his/her decision.

5. Be sure to emphasize my five strengths, such as _____ , _____ , _____ , _____ , and _____.
6. Be prepared to ask as well as answer questions.
7. Be on time and dress for the interview in the manner that would be appropriate for an employee in the job that I am applying for (e.g., secretary warehouseman, etc.).
8. Immediately after the interview, analyze what went right and what went wrong so that I can be better prepared for my next interview.

When Following Up on a Job, I will:

1. Do my follow-up immediately for each job lead.
2. Mention to the employer the name of the person who gave me the job lead.
3. Send a personal "Thank-you-note" for the interview addressed to the interviewer by name immediately after the interview.
4. Follow-up in person, by phone or letter only if the employer is out of the area or if the interviewer specifically requested that you follow-up by phone or letter.

To make the most of my job search efforts, I will:

1. Prepare a master application and effective resume (page 76).
2. Obtain letters of recommendation from _____ , _____ , and _____
3. Obtain letter(s) of reference from my former employer(s).
4. Develop a list of needs and the resources available to meet these needs.
5. Make a list of people who might be able to provide good job leads and earn their trust to be part of my networking contacts.
6. Research the company(s) that I have interviewed with.
7. Record the names of people that I talk with, their telephone numbers, addresses, dates of contact, results and any tips or leads, include when and how to follow-up.
8. Make a file or folder with all the papers and documents I may need (e.g., license(s), DD-214, Social Security Card, certification of training such as certificates and diplomas).

"How Do I Go About Applying for a Job?"

"How shall I prepare?"

"What will I have to complete before I begin seeking employment interviews?"

"Nothing ever happens until the paperwork is done right."

"Imagine looking at yourself on paper. Would an employer want to meet you?"

Objectives:

- Complete a master application for employment.
- Prepare a formatted resume and "Quick" card worksheet.
- Learn how to write a cover letter.

Overview:

Many people think completing an employment application is a simple process. In reality it is a screening device, used by employers to weed out applicants who don't follow directions, pay attention to details, or worry about neatness. The way an application is completed reflects one's willingness to take time to turn in a quality product, and shows the person's consideration for the reader. An application is really a pre-employment test. When a person doesn't complete it as requested, it may end up being discarded. On the other hand, a well-done application can lead to an immediate interview. There are documented cases of jobs being created for people, just because their applications were so attractive.

You have to look good on paper to receive the consideration you want.

Applications

The application is the tool most familiar to job seekers. It contains questions about a job seeker's personal and work related data. It may also be the employer's first impression of the job seeker. Therefore, for the ex-offender it is very important that this information be filled out correctly and completely.

Remember: your first impression is a lasting impression and you can't change that. You never get a second chance to make a first impression.

Employers will also use applications as a screening device, a way to eliminate undesirable applicants from consideration. They will also usually refer to the application during the interview. The application may become the basis for most of the interview questions. The application will also allow employers the opportunity to compare the applicants.

It is easy to be untruthful on the application; however, many employers will fire you if they find out that you lied about any important item on your application. All information you provide on a job application can be checked and verified. When you sign your application you are saying it is all true and approving that the employer can verify it, and most do.

In preparing your application for employment you may believe that because of your incarceration and/or lack of work history, your application may not contain enough information to even be considered for employment. No matter what you did before incarceration or during incarceration that society would consider a negative; you must look beneath the surface to find the positives that you can use in a legal employment situation. You must consider everything you did on the inside, and pull out from each, as many abilities, skills, and strengths as possible.

Take a look at some examples of activities listed below and see what strengths (positives) you can pull from these.

Involvement In An Athletic Event or Sport = team player; competitive spirit; think quickly on your feet; display confidence; self motivation; quick learner; outgoing personality; good physical condition; adapt easily to new situation; handle stress well.	Arts & Crafts = can produce on a team or individual situation; handle responsibility; need little or no supervision; very good with hands; detail oriented; a fast learner; emphasis on quality.	Clubs = speaking well before large or small audiences; a leader; take initiative; can follow directions; know how to delegate responsibilities; can be counted on to complete assigned tasks; organized.	Counseling = good listener; can explain information and thoughts clearly; open to new ideas; can admit to and learn from making mistakes; enjoy discussions with others.
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Applications and Resumes Offender Employment Re-Entry Guide

There may be many other strengths that you can think of for each of the above activities; these are just possibilities. Remember to look at all positive activities as an opportunity to improve your application.

What Employers Look for When Hiring

Employers ranked these factors that they consider in making hiring decisions, and what they consider most important.

Attitude -----	46%
Communication Skills -----	42%
Previous Work Experience -----	40%
Recommendations from Current Employees-----	34%
Previous Employer Recommendations -----	34%
Industry-based Credentials -----	32%
(Verifying Applicant's Skill) Years of Completed Schooling	29%
Scores on Test Administered as Part of the Interview ---	25%
Academic Performance-----	25%
Experience or Reputation of Applicant's School -----	24%
Teacher Recommendations -----	21%

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau National Survey)

What Is It That Employers Want Most of All?

Employers are looking for an employee who is job-ready and who possesses basic skills. Employers also want employees who will continue to show those desirable characteristics every day on the job.

A Good Employee is One Who:

1. Learns easily	9. Negotiates conflicts
2. Reads and writes well	10. Works as a team member
3. Uses computers well	11. Is organized
4. Listens carefully and speaks coherently	12. Exercises leadership
5. Strives for career development	13. Sets goals
6. Thinks creatively	14. Is self-motivated
7. Solves problems	15. Maintains self esteem
8. Gets along with others	16. Life long learner

(Source: Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want, U.S. Department of Labor and American Society for Training and Development.)

Classes You Took While Incarcerated

Stating that you took Victims Awareness implies that you had victims. Stating that you took Stress and Anger Management implies that you have had difficulty managing your anger. These listings would raise red flags for any employer. Instead, word things in business language. For example, you could say that you took:

- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication Skills
- Self Management Skills
- GED
- Life Skills

Be sure to list the community college that offered the class, not the correctional institution where the class was located. Offender Employment Services classes should be listed by their name; Job Hunter, Work Ethics, Job Dynamics. State that the class was completed through the Washington State Employment Security Department.

Reason for Leaving Last Employer

Many offenders have lost jobs because of being arrested or being fired or failing a drug test or not showing up for work. When listing your reasons for leaving, do not say that you were fired, quit, or that you were arrested and taken away. Below are examples of reasons for leaving that do not raise red flags of concern.

- Personal (now resolved)
- Will explain at interview
- Laid off or reduction in force
- Relocated
- Job ended
- Seasonal position
- Transportation issue (now resolved)
- Lack of hours/work
- Career Change
- Promoted
- Took time off to care for an ill family member
- Family reasons (now resolved)

Be sure to use the reason that fits your unique circumstance. Remember, you must still be prepared to provide an explanation when asked in an interview.

Filling Out Job Applications

Disclosing a Felony Conviction

It is particularly important for offenders to be truthful in filling out applications. However, the truth must be told in a way for the offender to get screened-in and invited to a face-to-face interview.

Question:

“Have you ever been convicted of a felony?” ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, it is recommended that the offender fill out the question as follows:

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain: Will explain at interview, I can be bonded.

Below are some compelling reasons to answer the question in this way.

- It allows you to be honest, yet protects your privacy by controlling who knows about the specific conviction.
- Stating that the felony is not job related and that the applicant is bondable may help to calm the employer's fears and perhaps even pique the employer's curiosity enough to call you in for an interview.
- Many Community Supervision Officers will tell an employer whether you have a felony or not.
- If an employer is going to find out, it is better to hear it from you.
- You control the flow of information - how it's worded, how it's presented.
- Once hired, you don't have to be constantly looking over your shoulder afraid someone will find out.
- Most employers do background checks.
- In the interview, you can talk about how productive you were in prison or jail.
- Employers can take advantage of Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and bonding.

Below is a list of other options to answering this question and probable consequences.

Check ‘YES’ and write the conviction. The candidate would likely be screened out and would lose privacy because anyone in the office who saw the application would know about the conviction.

Leave the question blank and/or put N/A. The application would appear incomplete and it would appear that the applicant is hiding something. When disclosing the felony at the interview, it would be awkward to explain why the questions are not filled in truthfully.

Check "NO" and lie. This appears to be the easiest route for many offenders and may help you get a job for the short term, but the longer-term consequences destroy any short-term gain. Consequences include:

- Not being hired because the lie was found out.
- Being fired as soon as the background check comes back.
- Carrying around emotional baggage wondering when you will be found out.
- Reinforcing offender stereotypes.
- Prosecution - especially if offender applied for a federal job.

Most employers do background checks before employees are promoted. So if an offender lied on the application, stayed with the company for a few years, became eligible for promotion, and the lie was exposed, the offender could:

- Lose a good job.
- Lose a good reference.
- Lose financial stability.
- Lose self-esteem.

Question:

Have you been convicted of a crime within the past ten years that directly relates to the position for which you are applying? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If the crime you have been convicted of has no direct relationship to the position for which you are applying you may answer "no". However, if the answer is "yes" you should mark "yes".

Example: You were convicted of forgery, and you are applying for a job as a bank teller. You would answer "yes," because your conviction has a direct relationship to the bank teller position.

Question:

What should I write if the question about conviction asks me to "explain"?

Always write "will explain at interview". This will keep everyone who may view your application from knowing your personal business.

Question:

How do I cover time in prison or jail on the "Work Experience" portion of the application? List only 2 or 3 of the jobs that may be in line with your future employment goals. If you did any work during your incarceration (i.e., janitor, cook, clerk, and or firefighter) submit the jobs you gained significant hands-on experience. During your incarceration, choose the jobs to describe that reflect skills gained, abilities developed, and accomplishments earned.

Example: If you worked both in the kitchen and as a janitor while incarcerated, you would indicate both jobs for your incarceration period and list only the year for dates of employment even though you may have moved from facility to facility and from job to job.

Applications and Resumes Offender Employment Re-Entry Guide

Question:

How do I complete the “business name”?

Use the abbreviated name of jail or corrections facility.

Example: If you worked as a janitor, cook, painter, etc., you worked for the abbreviation of the Jail or Corrections Facility. Chelan County Regional Justice Center = Chelan Co. RJC; Washington Corrections Center = Washington CC.

Question:

How about completing the “salary” portion of Job Experience?

You should complete wage or salary by stating "stipend" on your application.

Example: Salary Stipend hourly N/A. See the example that follows.

At the time of the interview you will be prepared to discuss your incarceration (page 92).

Question:

What about completing the “address” portion of Job History?

Do not use P.O. Boxes. Use only the city and state as the address, or only list the street address of the institution. The reason is that some people associate “P.O. Boxes” with prison or jail in certain towns.

Question:

What about phone numbers for previous employers?

Obtain permission to list your last work supervisor’s direct contact phone number. If you don’t know it, research it, write a letter for the phone number and request permission from the person responsible who oversaw your work or duties. If it’s not possible to obtain a direct phone number to an individual list the main phone number of the facility, or as a last resort list "unknown" as the contact phone number.

If previous private employers are “no longer in business” state that as the phone number. Collecting accurate phone numbers is important to make it easy for the employer to verify past jobs. If it’s too difficult the employer may get frustrated and by-pass the rest of your application moving to the next one.

Question:

How to complete the “reason for leaving” portion of Work Experience?

Correct responses can be “Relocated,” “Contract ended,” “Transferred,” or “Pursued other opportunities.”

What follows is an example of a Work Experience response. Please note the reason for completing the “Work Experience” portion this way is to get your application past whomever may be screening applications for interviews. It is vital that your “Work Experience” is complete, yet, don’t advertise your incarceration. That information is only between you and the interviewer not anyone who may see your application.

Example: WORK EXPERIENCE SECTION
Name: Twin Rivers CC or County RJC
Address: Monroe, Washington
Supervisor: N/A
Dates: From June 1, 1988 to June 30, 1989
Position: Cook Rate of pay: Stipend per N/A
Reason for leaving: Relocated

References

References are people you know who can tell employers about who you are and what you can do. References confirm the information on your employment application and/or resume. They also support your character, skills, accomplishments, and work habits. Having good things that are said about you from another person is reassuring to the employer. Ask permission before listing a person as a reference, and OK to refer an employer to call them. Ask your references for their business cards to have all their correct contact information.

The references you list on your job application and/or resume will more than likely receive a telephone call from prospective employers. **Make sure you talk with your reference in advance**, so they will prepare for the employer's call. Keep your references up-to-date on all your job hunting activities, especially good news about going to work. Thank them sincerely for all their support and again ask them to continue being a reference as you compete for better jobs. A good reference is as good as gold.

Type of References

The people you choose to ask to be listed for references depend upon your experiences, job goals, and the position you're seeking. If you are an experienced worker use these references:

- Previous bosses and supervisors
- People you may have supervised
- Former fellow workers

If you are a job hunter re-entering the work force use these references:

- Members or leaders of groups you belong to (Community, Religious groups, etc.).
- Supervisors from a part-time or full-time jobs
- Teachers

If you are entering the work force for the first time use these references:

- Personal friends
- Counselors
- Teachers, doctors, lawyers
- Landlords
- People you have been involved with in volunteer projects

Employment Reference Worksheet

You should have at least three references that are not related to you.

1. Name of Reference: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Company: _____

Work Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address (optional): _____

Fax Number: (optional): _____

Relationship to you: _____

2. Name of Reference: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Company: _____

Work Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address (optional): _____

Fax Number: (optional): _____

Relationship to you: _____

3. Name of Reference: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Company: _____

Work Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address (optional): _____

Fax Number: (optional): _____

Relationship to you: _____

Master Application for Employment

Now with the detailed information you've collected prepare a sample master application, which will be what you'll use to start your job hunt. Fill out every question with the complete accurate information. Find all the addresses, dates, and required information now to prepare the sample master job application then keep it up-to-date.

Your fully completed master application has all the information to prepare any application consistently and quickly. Employers will require you complete their job application, this way you are ready to apply for any job opening you find right then and there.

SAMPLE MASTER APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Complete all information accurately, completely, and honestly. This application is incomplete without answers to all questions or N/A as not applicable.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name (Last)	(First)	(Middle Initial)	Home Telephone () -
Address (Mailing Address)	(City)	(State)	(Zip)
E-Mail Address (optional)		Are you legally entitled to work in the U.S.? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

POSITION

Position Or Type Of Employment Desired	Will Accept: <input type="checkbox"/> Part-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Full-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary	Shift: <input type="checkbox"/> Day <input type="checkbox"/> Swing <input type="checkbox"/> Graveyard <input type="checkbox"/> Rotating
Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job you are applying for, with or without reasonable accommodation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Salary Desired	Date Available	

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

High School Graduate Or General Education (GED) Test Passed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, list the highest grade completed						
College, Business School, Military (Most recent first)						
Name and Location	Dates Attended Month/Year	Credits Earned		Graduate	Degree & Year	Major or Subject
		Quarterly or Semester Hours	Other (Specify)			
	From			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	To					
	From			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	To					
	From			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	To					
	From			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	To					
Occupational License, Certificate or Registration		Number	Where Issued		Expiration Date	
Occupational License, Certificate or Registration		Number	Where Issued		Expiration Date	
Languages Read, Written or Spoken Fluently Other Than English						

VETERAN INFORMATION (Most recent)

Branch of Service	Date of Entry	Date of Discharge
--------------------------	----------------------	--------------------------

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Have you been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony within the past ten- (10) years that might unfavorably affect your fitness for this job? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please explain.

SPECIAL SKILLS (List all pertinent skills and equipment that you can operate)

--

WORK EXPERIENCE (Most Recent First) (Include voluntary work and military experience)

Employer	Telephone Number () -	From (Month/Year)
Address		
Job Title	Number Employees Supervised	To (Month/Year)
Specific Duties		Hours Per Week
		Last Salary
		Supervisor
Reason For Leaving		May We Contact This Employer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Employer	Telephone Number () -	From (Month/Year)
Address		
Job Title	Number Employees Supervised	To (Month/Year)
Specific Duties		Hours Per Week
		Last Salary
		Supervisor
Reason For Leaving		May We Contact This Employer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Employer	Telephone Number () -	From (Month/Year)
Address		
Job Title	Number Employees Supervised	To (Month/Year)
Specific Duties		Hours Per Week
		Last Salary
		Supervisor
Reason For Leaving		May We Contact This Employer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Employer	Telephone Number () -	From (Month/Year)
Address		
Job Title	Number Employees Supervised	To (Month/Year)
Specific Duties		Hours Per Week
		Last Salary
		Supervisor
Reason For Leaving		May We Contact This Employer? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

I certify the information contained in this application is true, correct, and complete. I understand that, if employed, false statements reported on this application may be considered sufficient cause for dismissal.

My Personal References: Name, title, company, and complete address, phone number, relation to you.

1.
2.
3.

Resumes and "Quick" Cards

Resumes are used by most job seekers as a means of advertising their qualities. The purpose is to spark an employer's interest enough to be interviewed. Simply, you are making an impression on paper for the opportunity to personally convince a business to hire you. You want to meet the employer face-to-face!

A resume is an individual statement that communicates abilities, skills, education, training, experience, plans, attitudes and character. These traits are presented in a style that indicates this person will meet the employer expectations. The effort also demonstrates preparation, organization and seriousness.

Your resume doesn't need to be overly complicated or full of unnecessary information. But, like an application, **the resume is often an employer's first impression** so it should be a good one. The appearance of the resume is as important as its content. The resume needs to be neat, easy to read and should not contain grammatical or spelling errors.

Resumes can be presented individually or to businesses where you are interested in working or, they can be included with completed applications. They could make the difference between you and someone else who is equally qualified. Resumes can also be used when applying to colleges, vocational-technical (voc-tech) schools, Job Corps, group homes, and other places or organizations where you wish to gain admittance.

This work search tool may not be for everyone, especially younger youth who are seeking their first job. However, as you acquire experience, training, and education and have made goals, an updated resume should definitely be included in your portfolio.

Another means of selling yourself to an employer is through a "quick" card. These are three by five (3" X 5") or four by six (4" x 6") file cards containing the same basic information included on a resume. They stress your strong points and can be left with businesses or clipped to an application as a written reminder of your qualifications.

"Quick" cards are not as detailed or complete as a resume, but are simpler to construct. They can be hand-printed which is much easier for someone without access to a computer, printer or typewriter. They also take less time, and do not require special materials. "Quick" cards are less expensive and can be just as effective as a resume, (neat and organized). "Quick" cards can be easily changed for different businesses, objectives and situations.

Resumes and "quick" cards help you prepare for other aspects of the job search. By thinking about and organizing your strengths and qualifications in positive terms, you are actually practicing for applications and interviewing.

Job Directed Resume Instruction Sheet

- Name:** Centered in bold print. Font should not be unusual or distracting. Helvetica, Courier and Geneva print types are commonly used. Use your full first and last name; middle name is optional. Do not use a nickname.
- Address:** Centered one space below name, use regular print and spell everything out. Be sure to center the city, state and zip code below the address. Do not use abbreviations.
- Phone:** Centered below city, state and zip code. List area code first. Provide a daytime number that will be answered by you or someone responsible who will get you the message. Answering machines are acceptable if the message is not inappropriate or silly.

Job Objective:

Be as specific as possible:

Employment as a retail salesperson at Footlocker.

If you are unsure of where you will be applying, or unable to make individual copies, describe your objective in broader terms such as:

Employment as a retail salesperson.

List according to:

Work Related Abilities:

Reflect the work qualities important for most jobs.

List four or five that are most suitable to your abilities and qualifications.

Examples:

- Hard Worker - Work is done to the best of one's ability.
- Enthusiastic - Good attitude, wants to work and does not complain.
- Quick learner - Does not need repeated instruction or training.
- Takes direction well - Does not need repeated instruction or training.
- Good interpersonal skills - Interacts well with others; co-workers and public.
- Reliable - Tasks are completed consistently and independently.
- Dependable - Shows up on time and ready to work.
- Honest - No explanation needed.

Employment Experience:

Description of past work experience including position, duties, responsibilities, and location. Don't forget to include advancements and equipment operated, especially if related to the job.

Tab and highlight.

Education and Goals:

Describe present education status.

Examples: "Completed General Education Development (GED) Certification; High School Diploma; or presently working towards your GED or High School Diploma".

It is important to mention goals, short and long term, that relate to continued learning and training. For instance: Plan to continue skills development in Vocational School, Technical College, Community College, Job Corps or otherwise. Be as specific as possible.

Then describe your main areas of interest.

Example: Interested in environment related careers and construction.

Training:

List any relevant training, permits, certificates, competencies and experience.

Examples are: vocational and pre-vocational classes, training received through state or local government employment, food handlers cards, First Aid and/or CPR instruction, and on the job situations.

Related Experience:

List other experience that's relevant to the job objective and not mentioned previously. This can include any unpaid or volunteer work, hobbies and interests that demonstrate transferable skills are appropriate.

References available upon request:

Can be in-line below other categories (left margin) or centered. Don't mention names specifically but be ready to supply if requested.

Now you have a resume, have someone review it for a critique. It's highly recommended to always getting a second opinion on the resume you produce. This will help ensure you are gaining the desired effect you want the resume to have, the best reflection of what an employer needs to know about you. Don't be afraid to take suggestions and make improvements. Consider your resume a "living document" one that is never finished being written. Keep your resume up-to-date as you gain additional job experience, skills, abilities, and education. You'll be ready for the next job opportunity to compete for.

Give a copy of your resume to each of your references for their feedback, they will also want it to refer to when contacted by an employer.

**Power Words
for
Resumes**

ACCOMPANIED	CONSULTED	FED	MANAGED	REARRANGED
ACCUMULATED	CONTACTED	FIGURED	MANUFACTURED	REBUILT
ACHIEVED	CONTRACTED	FILED	MARKED	RECALLED
ACQUIRED	CONTRASTED	FILLED	MARKETED	RECEIVED
ADMINISTERED	CONTROLLED	FINANCED	MEASURED	RECOMMENDED
ADMITTED	CONVERTED	FINISHED	MET	RECONCILED
ADVISED	CONVINCED	FIRED	MODIFIED	RECORDED
AIDED	COORDINATED	FITTED	MONITORED	REDUCED
ALLOWED	COPIED	FIXED	MOTIVATED	REFERRED
ANALYZED	CORRECTED	FORMULATED		REGISTERED
ANSWERED	CORRESPONDED	FOUNDED	NEGOTIATED	REGULATED
APPLIED	COUNSELED	GOVERNED	NOMINATED	RELATED
APPOINTED	COUNTED	GRADED	NOTED	RELAYED
APPRaised	CREATED	GRAPHED	NOTIFIED	RENEWED
ARRANGED		GREETED	NUMBERED	REORGANIZE
ASSEMBLED	DEBATED	HANDLED		REPAIRED
ASSESSED	DECIDED	HEADED	OBSERVED	REPLACED
ASSIGNED	DELIVERED	HELPED	OBTAINED	REPORTED
ASSISTED	DEMONSTRATED	HIRED	OPENED	REQUESTED
ATTACHED	DEPOSITED		OPERATED	RESEARCHED
ATTENDED	DESCRIBED	IDENTIFIED	ORDERED	RESERVED
AUTHORIZED	DESIGNED	IMPLEMENTED	ORGANIZED	REPOSIBLE
	DETAILED	IMPROVED	OUTLINED	RETRIEVED
BALANCED	DETERMINED	IMPROVISED	OVERCAME	REVISED
BILLED	DEVELOPED	INCREASED		ROUTED
BOUGHT	DEVISED	INDEXED	PACKAGED	
BUDGETED	DIAGNOSED	INDICATED	PACKED	SCHEDULED
BUILT	DISCOVERED	INFORMED	PAID	SECURED
	DISMANTLED	INITIATED	PARTICIPATED	SELECTED
CALCULATED	DISPATCHED	INSPECTED	PATROLLED	SENT
CASHED	DISPENSED	INSTALLED	PERFECTED	SEPARATED
CATALOGED	DISPLACED	INSTRUCTED	PERFORMED	SERVED
CHANGED	DIRECTED	INSURED	PILOTED	SERVICED
CHARGED	DISTRIBUTED	INTEGRATED	PLACED	SET UP
CHARTED	DOCUMENTED	INTERPRETED	PLANED	SHOWED
CHECKED	DREW	INTERVIEWED	POSTED	SOLD
CLASSIFIED	DROVE	INTRODUCED	PREPARED	SOLICITED
CLEANED		INVENTORIED	PRESCRIBED	SORTED
CLEARED	EARNED	INVESTIGATED	PRESENTED	STOCKED
CLOSED	EDUCATED	INVOICED	PRICED	STORED
CODED	EMPLOYED	ISSUED	PRINTED	STRIVE
COLLECTED	ENCOURAGED	JUDGED	PROCESSED	SUMMARIZED
COMANDED	ENGINEERED	JUSTIFIED	PRODUCED	SUPERVISED
COMMUNICATED	ENTERTAINED	KEPT	PROGRAMMED	SUPPLIED
COMPILED	ESTABLISHED		PROMOTED	
COMPLETED	ESTIMATED	LEARNED	PROMPTED	TALLIED
COMPOSED	EVALUATED	LECTURED	PROOFREAD	TAUGHT
COMPUTED	EXAMINED	LED	PROPOSED	TESTED
CONDUCTED	EXCHANGED	LICENSED	PROVED	TELEPHONED
CONFERRED	EXERTED	LISTENED	PROVIDED	TRANSFERRED
CONSTRUCTED	EXHIBITED	LISTED	PUBLISHED	TRANSPORT
	EXPERIENCED	LOADED	PURCHASED	TUTORED
	EXPANDED	LOCATED		TYPED
		LOGGED	RAN	VERIFIED
	FABRICATED	MAILED	RATED	
	FACILITATED	MAINTAINED	READ	

Pre-Resume and Quick Card Outline

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

My Job Objective: _____

Best Work Skills (5 or more): _____

Job Specific Skills: _____

Work Experience (list in order, most recent first, and copy information from master application):

Training, Certificates and Additional Job Related Experiences (see application):

Educational, Vocational and Life Goals:

Special Interests and Hobbies:

List 3 references; (addresses, phone numbers and their relationship to you):

Reference 1; Address:

Phone #:

Relationship:

Reference 2; Address:

Phone #:

Relationship:

Reference 3; Address:

Phone #:

Relationship:

"Quick" Card Instruction Guide

"Quick" cards are similar to resumes but don't require equipment like computers and printers that may not be available to everyone. They can be easily adapted to different job titles (open jobs) and businesses too. When made and used correctly, a "Quick" card quickly communicates a person's abilities, skills and potential to an employer.

The required materials are white or lightly colored 3"X5" or 4"X6" file cards, a black ink pen and the necessary personal information. First complete the resume/quick card outline. This information can also be obtained from a completed master application.

Printing should be neat and easily readable; type is better. Just like an application or resume, there shouldn't be any spelling or grammatical errors.

Name: First, last and middle initial (optional), Phone: (best daytime number)

Objective: Objective should be as specific as possible. Examples: Nursery worker; Carpenter's Helper or Landscaper.

Job Specific Skills: List those skills that relate directly to the above objective. (i.e., familiar with chainsaws, brush cutters, and power-pruners; would be skills that apply to a landscaper's assistant.)

Work Skills or Strengths: These are the universal or transferable skills necessary on all jobs, (i.e. hard worker, enthusiastic, quick learner, takes directions well, good interpersonal skills, responsible, reliable, dependable and honest).

Experience: Highlight any work (paid or unpaid) that shows direct or transferable experience with the objective. See the sample "quick" cards for examples.

Training: Describe training relevant to the Objective, (i.e. completed Culinary Arts Program; State Certified Wastewater Technician; or on-the-job training).

Education: Identify completed status such as "GED certified" or "High School Graduate".

1. Use different headings to fit the objective, and also reflect individual strengths and preferences. The headings can be arranged in any order.
2. "Quick" cards, like resumes, are used to tell an employer what you can do for them. Attach your card to the applications or leave them at businesses where you would like to work. Then call back after a few days to ask if you can fill out an application or better, possibly interview for the "hidden" job that may not be open yet.
3. Remember to always look like you're going to an interview. You will never know if someone makes a judgement based on your appearance, so be prepared.

Sample “Quick” Cards

Name: _____ Daytime Phone Number: _____

Employment Objective: Certified Washington State Wastewater Operator.

Capabilities: Quick learner who pays attention to details. Can take direction and work as a team. Career minded individual with desire to advance in knowledge and experience.

Valid Washington State Drivers License.

Will work any shift, plus weekends and holidays.

Hard worker, good attitude, reliable, responsible, and honest.

Name: _____ Daytime Phone Number: _____

Objective: Employment using skills and abilities.

Work Skills: Enthusiastic, quick learner, take directions well, good interpersonal skills, and responsible.

Experience: Six months as a forestry worker with the Washington Department of Natural Resources. Familiar with power tools and safety practices.

Strengths: Hard worker, good attitude, reliable and honest.

Will work different shifts, weekends, and holidays.

Name: _____ Daytime Phone Number: _____

Vocational Objective: Cook, Prep-Cook, or Related Position,

Experience: Have cooked, prepared and served food in quantity. Interested in food service (cooking) as a career.

Training: Completed pre-vocational Culinary Arts program.

Valid Washington State Food Handlers Permit.

Strengths: Hard worker, good attitude, reliable and honest.

Willing to work nights, weekends, and holidays.

Preparing the Cover Letter

Every resume should be accompanied by a cover letter, which:

- Is a personal correspondence between you and the employer.
- Expresses your knowledge of the company.
- Establishes a connection between your abilities and the employer's needs.
- Introduces your resume and invites the reader to explore it fully.

Cover Letter Guidelines

Keep in mind the following as you write your cover letter:

- Personalize the letter; address it to a specific person by name and job title.
- Briefly explain why you're writing and set the tone from the very beginning.
- Keep it short, to the point, and powerful.
- Highlight your qualifications that are relevant to the job applied for.
- Use simple, direct language, correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. Type neatly and proofread it. Hand sign your signature above your typed name.
- Let your individuality show but avoid being too cute, too humorous, too aggressive or too familiar. Put the best you in the letter.
- Use the same bond paper as your resume.
- Close with your commitment to follow up by asking for an interview or indicating when and how you will be contacting them next.
- Remember: some employers ask for cover letters mainly to assess your writing skills and whether or not you can format a letter.

Cover Letter Outline

Introduction Paragraph – Tell why you are writing i.e., how you heard about the job opening. Name the position or department for which you are applying. Show there is a benefit coming by setting a positive tone. Make it clear that you have done research and that you have something to offer. Write about the employer in this paragraph, not about you.

Body – Your objective in the cover letter is to intrigue the reader. Highlight skills and qualifications that are relevant to the job. State why you would be good for the position and what value you can bring to the employer. Let them know that what you have to offer matters to them. Keep it specific to what you know the employer is looking for and places value in. Be brief, confident and genuine.

Concluding Information – Reiterate your interest in working for the company. Indicate your plan of action for following up. Express your thanks for the time they are taking to review and consider your resume.

Helpful Hint – Remember to include your name, address and best phone number as a heading to the letter. Spell out the employer's name and job title, company name, and address. Don't forget to sign your name above your typed name.

Sample Cover Letter

Your Name
Your Street
Your City, State & Zip Code
Your Best Contact Area Code & Phone Number

Today's date

Hiring Authority's First and Last Name
Hiring Authority's Job Title
Target Company
Street Address
City, State Zip

Dear <Name of Hiring Authority>:

In response to your recent position opening advertisement, please accept this letter of interest for the <name of> job currently available. I believe I can meet your needs and contribute to the fine reputation your company has established.

As you can see from my enclosed resume, my education <type of training>, as well as my varied <types of> skills and abilities, make me a strong candidate for this opportunity. I have solid experience in this field and personal commitment to provide quality services to meet your customer's needs.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you at a mutually convenient time. I will call you next Monday to try to schedule a meeting. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name

Enclosure: Personal Resume

As an ex-offender, the more I understand what an employer wants the better I will be able to highlight my best skills and abilities. This is the art of selling yourself.

“What do I have to offer an employer?” If you can’t answer this question in an interview situation you need more practice until you can.

What determines success in an interview?

- | | |
|--|------------|
| • Packaging (your resume, application, dress and appearance) | 45% |
| • Responsiveness (your facial expressions, verbal answers) | 35% |
| • Experience (demonstrating your match to the employers needs) | 10% |
| • Miscellaneous (mood and tone of the interview) | <u>10%</u> |
| You control 90% of the interviews’ successful outcome | 100% |

The 3 Principles of Dress Code

1. Dress one step above the position you're seeking
2. People judge by first impressions
3. It's your choice: Look your best and reduce risks.

Objectives:

- Learn what employers expect from an interview.
- Prepare answers to frequently asked questions.
- Practice interviewing skills.

Overview:

- Non-verbal messages
- Interview preparation
- Typical phases of an interview
- Incarceration speech
- Think like an employer and anticipate their concerns, how you will respond.
- Practice interview questions
- Questions you may ask the interviewer
- Thank you notes
- Testing

Non-Verbal Messages

Eye Contact: Looking a person in the eye shows sureness, openness and honesty. Make brief eye contact with the interviewer. Keep your head up. Make occasional eye contact during the interview. Give back roughly the same amount of eye contact the employer gives you.

Voice: Your voice should be clear and loud enough to hear across the room. Practice speaking clearly, say your words carefully and use good grammar (*no* prison or jail slang). Breathing deeply helps you feel and sound more relaxed. Drinking tea with lemon can help clear your throat.

Facial Expression: A slight smile and open eyes make you look smart, alert and friendly. Practice the look in front of the mirror. Use your face to show your best traits.

Posture: Walk tall, sit forward in your chair, hold your head up, keep your back and shoulders straight. Pretend there is a string from the clouds to the top of your head, holding your body in a straight line. Be aware of how you are sitting and standing, without being rigid.

Mannerisms: Be aware of nervous behavior you may fall into. Avoid tapping your fingers, playing with your hair, wriggling your feet, wringing your hands, etc. Use your hands to emphasize what you are saying, but don't be too wild with your gestures. Draw an imaginary box as wide as your shoulders from your neck to your hips. Hand gestures should stay inside the box.

Attitude: Your body language "speaks louder than words", telling the world how you feel. Watch people and think about what attitude you want to convey and practice using body language to give the message. First impressions are made in a few seconds and last forever. When you walk into an interview, the first thing an interviewer sees is how you look. The second is your handshake. Handshaking is a very important part of the interview. A good handshake is firm but not hard. Use your full hand to shake the full hand of the other person, not just your fingertips. The handshake should last about two seconds. Practice counting time-off "one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand" -- let go). If the other person lets go before that, it's OK, to follow their lead. Make eye contact and smile while shaking hands.

Preparing for the Interview

How you look:

- *Be well groomed, neat and clean.* How you present yourself reflects your pride.
- Clothes: Clean, pressed and fit well; shoes shined and appropriate for the job.
- Dress one level above what you think you will be wearing to work on the job. Avoid short skirts, tops that are low-cut or show the midriff, and excessively high heels.
- Overall: Hair combed; fingernails clean; teeth brushed; freshly showered or bathed. No heavy perfume or makeup; do not smoke before the interview, do not chew gum during the interview; avoid alcohol the night before. Feel sharp, be sharp.

Paperwork to take:

- Resume, certificates and references.
- Letters of recommendation and samples of your work.
- Identification, Social Security card and other proof of citizenship.
- Brochures on Washington State Bonding and WOTC employer tax credit incentive.

Study the Company:

- *Size*: sales, profit, people.
- *Products*: Types of products and clients.
- *Market*: growth--strong/weak, seasonal/non-seasonal.
- *Company*: how it's set up, other parts of the company, parent company.
- *Managers*: who they are and their style as leaders.
- *Fund Base*: public, private, government.
- *Competition*: who else makes the same products.

Review:

- Practice answering interview questions.
- Know what the company is looking for.
- Know what you want to say about yourself.
- Practice shaking hands, making eye contact, and smiling.
- Know your interests, skills and abilities.
- Check directions and parking beforehand, if possible.

On Your Way:

- Be early, go alone.
- Eat a breath mint ahead of time.
- Be able to pronounce the name of the person who you are meeting.
- Relax: *Breathe deeply; know you're prepared; and that you have good skills and abilities to offer or you wouldn't have been invited to the interview.*

Once there:

- Shake hands; greet the interviewer in a friendly manner.
- Pay attention and establish eye contact.
- Smile and be polite to everyone during the interview.

Typical Phases of an Interview

Many (but not all) interviews have natural stages they go by. Knowing these stages can help you be comfortable and ready as each step comes up.

Introductory stage:

- A brief hello and handshake.
- An attempt to help you feel at ease.
- Interviewer gives some general history and explains the job.
- A shared "first impression" happens.
- The interviewer has the lead.

Inquiry stage (the longest):

- Interviewer still has the lead.
- The questions asked are to find out who you are and what you are looking for.
- The interviewer is looking for what you can do for the company.
- Keep replies positive, short and right to the point.
- Refer to your past job successes, personal abilities and give examples.
- Watch for clues that reveal problems you can help solve.

Marketing stage:

- Applicant takes the lead - (you have about *one minute*).
- Show how your abilities and past work can help the company if you get the job.
- Deliver your incarceration speech.
- Explain what you can do for the company if you get the job.
- Show interest in the job - why you would like to work for this company.
- Ask the questions you have planned ahead of time.

Closure:

- Ask how they are going to choose the person that they will be hiring.
- Discuss the salary range of the job (*if it is brought up*).
- Plan your follow-up (arrange to call at a certain time, day, etc.).
- Let them know again - briefly and strongly, why you want the job.
- Thank them for the time and courtesy.
- Be aware of the time (don't stretch it out) and leave politely.

It's recommended you ***disclose your incarceration during the marketing stage*** of the interview by repeating your:

Incarceration Speech

- There is something that you have the right to know:
- In (year) _____, I made a mistake and was convicted of _____.
- At the time my judgement was clouded by _____
- ...But I am putting that behind me now!
- I admit that this was a serious error in my judgement and **I want to assure you that I have changed.**

Key Words saying how: _____

- I worked while I was incarcerated as a _____ and learned how to:

Key Words: _____

- There are some advantages you are eligible for if you decide to hire me.
 1. I can be bonded up to \$10,000.
 2. As an employer, you are eligible for a Work Opportunities Tax Credit (WOTC). You would be eligible to receive up to a \$2,400 federal credit for the first \$6,000 in wages you pay me.
- I am aware that my past actions may cause you to question my judgement , but, **I am prepared to do whatever it takes to prove myself to be a reliable and capable employee.**

Key Words saying how: _____

The trick to answering this question is to: **Tell the truth!**

1. Accept responsibility for what you did: "I can't blame anyone other than myself for what I did."
2. Briefly identify one reason for your action: "I do know that the people I spent most of my time with influenced me a lot and I did what they all did...just to hang around them."
3. Limit the amount of detail that you give: "I know; it sounds simple, but there is not much more to it than that."

What can an employer ask about my doing time?

Almost everyone has some interest in knowing about the "other side" of life. The same may be true of interviewers. They're interested in an "inside look" at jail life. It makes great stories when they are talking to other people.

1. Indicate lack of fun: "I'm sure you understand that jail is not a place where most people want to be."
2. Simply state what a "working day" in jail is like. "I had to wake up at 5:30 each morning, if I wanted to eat. Then I prepared for work. After that, it was pretty much like any other job. I had to meet the production quotas, do good work and follow the directions of the supervisors...or else I didn't get paid or wasn't allowed to stay on the job."
3. Relate jail work to competitive work: In fact, a workday in jail/prison is not too different than a workday on the outside.

Prospective employers can inquire about arrests; whether charges are still pending, have been dismissed, or led to conviction of a crime involving behavior which would adversely affect job performance. Inquires concerning convictions or imprisonment will be considered to be justified by business necessity if the crimes inquired about relate reasonably to the job duties, and such convictions (or release from prison or jail) occurred within the last ten (10) years.

CAUTION: Don't let the employer drag you into talking in detail or at length about what goes on in an institution. That is not the purpose of your interview session.

- **Keep your answers simple and clear (vague answers sound like you're hiding things)...**
- **Keep your answers brief...**
- **Keep your dignity.**

What Did You Gain While Incarcerated?	What Did You Lose While Incarcerated?
a) Improved education, which will help you in your job	a) Access to and respect from your kids
b) A healthy respect for authority and rules	b) Trust from your family and friends
c) A genuine respect for other people's rights	c) Contact with your community
d) A better understanding of why you do things	d) Accomplishing personal goals
e) Increased ability to get along in pressure situations	e) Personal property (car, home, etc...)
f) Much more patience in handling problems, troubleshooting	f) Self esteem
g) Job related skills training	g) Money you could have earned working
h) Counseling that helped you change your behavior	h) Opportunity to enter certain types of careers
i) A desire to do what's right so you don't return	i) Ability to travel any where you want
j) Improved self-discipline	j) Right to enter the job market on your own terms
k) Renewed respect for the value of hard work	k) Sense of accomplishment

You May Have to Go Out on a Limb to Get the Job You Want, Be Honest.

1. **Indicate only the last conviction:** I committed a property offense...
2. **State the mistake and accept responsibility:** It was a mistake, but I did it and...
3. **Indicate sorrow for victims of crime:** I have been sorry for what I did to the victim(s) ever since...

4. **State that you learned something:** By committing the crime I lost my spouse and children, the trust of my family, my car, my home and much of my self-respect.
5. **State that you have learned something:** If there can be anything good to come from my crime, I would have to say that I did learn a lot about myself.
6. **Indicate what you learned:** I gained more respect for other people's rights. I learned how to follow directions and developed more self-control than I ever had before.
7. **Focus on the most important thing you learned:** The most important thing that I learned is that you have to work for what you want.
8. **State what you did to make the best of the situation:** While incarcerated, I took classes in carpentry, electricity, plumbing, dry walling and masonry so that I would have marketable skills upon my release.
9. **Relate your incarceration experience to work:** In fact, I was even promoted to foreman of the crew that did most of the in-house maintenance work.
10. **Indicate your need to earn your way back into the community:** I know that I am going to have to earn my way back into society and I am willing to do whatever I need to do that.
11. **Indicate your willingness to talk about things:** Don't hesitate asking me questions about my incarceration or why I did what I did. Even though it embarrasses me, you deserve to know as much about me as you want to know.

How do I know you'll go straight, or that the police won't be at my door?

There are never any guarantees when a person hires "anyone." This might be considered a loaded question and you have to handle this one with "class."

1. Indicate that you understand the employer's concern, "I can understand that you might be worried about this, I would be."
2. Compare yourself to other workers. "Aside from my having made a serious mistake, I am not much different than your other workers."
3. Point out that there are no guarantees in life. "I'm sure that when you hired some of your employees you thought that they might not work out... but they did, and that some of those you thought would work out, did not."
4. Indicate reasons for doing well on the job. "I do know that if I make an error or a mistake on the job, I pay a much higher price than anyone else."

5. Indicate that you are eligible for Bonding and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (W.O.T.C.).
6. Tell them that talk won't prove it, though you've been open and honest. Then say: "Give me a chance, give me the job and I'll prove it to you in my work!"

What will the other workers think?

In preparing for this situation, there are three different tactics that you might use: confidentiality, hard work breeds acceptance, and a learning experience approach.

Confidentiality

One tactic is to try to keep the information hidden except from those who need to know, for as long as you can. The problem with this approach is that you'll probably have to isolate yourself from the rest of the workers. This might not do you much good and the other workers might see you as "stand-off-ish" or "stuck-up." The boss might also hire someone who knows the scoop on you.

To use this approach, you have to:

1. **Request confidentiality:** "I would like to request that only the people who need to know, have information regarding my criminal history."
2. **Gets the interviewer to commit to your request:** "Do You?"
3. **Shows separation of job and social life:** "I plan on keeping the work I do and my social life completely apart."
4. **Negotiate idea of a problem:** "I don't think that a problem should ever arise."
5. **Show preparation in case it does come up:** " But I figure that if I do a good job, put in more than my fair share of effort, and help others, keep my mouth shut, and ears open, I'll be accepted by the other workers, even if they do find out."

Hard Work Breeds Acceptance

Another tactic is to assume that sooner or later someone is going to find out that you are an ex-felon. It is important that you try to do good work and develop good working relationships. Even though we can't determine how each co-worker and supervisor will initially react, we do know that if you do good work and get along with your co-workers, you will be accepted...sooner or later.

1. **Indicate that you understand the problem:** "I understand why you think this might be a problem."
2. **State knowledge of need of time:** "I know that it will take time to build trust and friendship."
3. **Stress relationship between good:** "I'm also convinced that doing good work and helping people in their jobs is one of the best ways to get people to like you, even if you made a mistake."
4. **Stress productivity:** "One thing you will get from me is a person who is trying to do their best and I am motivated to give my best, just to be accepted."

Learning Experience

A third tactic is to use the approach that your being hired will turn into a learning experience for all involved. We already know that people like to find out about "the other side of life" so we try to use that as a way to answer the question about what the other workers will think.

1. **Indicate you understand the problem:** "I can understand your worry about how other people will accept me and I'd worry about it too."
2. **Turn into a learning experience:** "But, also consider this an opportunity for everyone to learn..."
3. **Indicate what they'll learn:** "About the negative results" of crime and the price you have to pay for being on the other side of the law."
4. **Show what you'll learn:** "On the other hand, I know that I'll be able to learn about the company and job from them."
5. **Give question back to the interviewer:** "Doesn't this seem like a good opportunity for all considered?"

Other Problem Areas

Gaps in employment history: This answer depends on your individual circumstances. What it was that caused you to be unemployed. For example, "I was self-employed during that time" or "it took some time for me to recover from my injury, but I'm fine now and ready to go to work," or "I had a number of part-time jobs during that time-mostly seasonal, which I didn't bother to put down." See sections on emotional illness or jail/prison record for examples of possible responses for those reasons.

For women, there are a number of good explanations involving such things as "I was needed by my parents." If married, "I was raising my family," or "I was helping care for my grandmother," "I was babysitting," "I was doing housework for a relative."

Everyone who has been unemployed has been engaged in something. Put the best construction into your interview. If you have been traveling around and enjoying life, it is best to admit it, perhaps with a statement such as "I am ready to settle down to a good job."

The idea is to tell the truth, but to pick the most acceptable reason out of the several possibilities that the applicant may have, and use that one. The impression to give is that the individual was occupied with some meaningful activity even though he/she was not gainfully employed.

No recent work history: See the ideas listed above. It is important to convey that you are definitely eager to go to work **NOW!** Avoid the impression that you have been looking for work for a number of months, but no one would hire you. (No employer wants to hire someone all others have rejected!)

Have never worked: If you've just left school, this is not a big problem. Other examples: "taking a correspondence course," "working for neighbors," "helping on the family farm or business..." anything that suggests constructive activity.

The individual is telling the employer that he may not be able to learn academic things quickly, but that his performance will be consistent once he knows what to do.

The individual might also be able to say, "Because it does take me a little longer than most people to learn new things, I am satisfied with work that does not have a lot of variety." (a routine job). The individual tells the employer that he has recognized the speech problem, that he/she has had therapy, and does try to compensate for it by speaking more slowly. The employer is likely to understand that the individual would be nervous in an interview, and speech problems would be aggravated.

Younger than most on the job for which you are applying: "I know that I am only ____ years old, but I can learn a job quickly, and I'm interested in getting a steady job that I can keep for several years. This presents youth as an asset in being able to learn a job quickly. Anticipates employer's reaction (that he/she expects a young person will not stay on the job long), and counters this by saying that he/she is looking for a job that he/she will be able to keep for a long time.

Think Like the Employer

You can tell the employer over and over that you are the best person for the job, but the easiest and most believable way to show that you are is to prove it by giving examples. This exercise will help you get ready to answer the questions interviewers use most often to find out if you own these traits.

Look at the qualities listed below. Write down a few key words to remind you of when you have shown that quality in your past. Write enough to trigger your memory so that you can discuss it, if you need to.

1. **Willingness to take responsibility:** What things have you done to show what you can do and take initiative?

Key Words: _____

2. **Ability to handle conflict:** What have you done to resolve problems with others? How did you act in the middle of a conflict?

Key Words: _____

3. **Ability to speak clearly:** Are you able to group your thoughts and explain them? Are you brief and to the point? Are you a good listener? How have you shown this?

Key Words: _____

4. **Ability to bend - give a little:** Have there been new situations you've adapted to? How do you deal with stress?

Key Words: _____

5. **Problem Solving:** How you found good solutions to a problem? Have you learned your job duties quickly?

Key Words: _____

6. **People Skills:** When working with others as a team, have you worked as a follower, leader or both? How strong are you at dealing with others?

Key Words: _____

7. **Self-confidence:** You have strengths and abilities. What are your strengths and abilities? Can you tell someone what you are able to do?

Key Words: _____

8. **Job Skills:** Do you accept new ways of doing things easily? Have you kept all the skills needed to do your job?

Key Words: _____

9. **Willingness to accept new ideas:** In what ways have you shown your good will?

Key Words: _____

10. **Energy level:** Are you ready to work hard to reach your job goals?

Key Words: _____

Give Proof by Example

Nearly all interview questions need answers that show what you bring to the worksite. Some of the most often asked questions could be answered by sharing an example of how you handled a situation in the past job. Then link it to what you can do, or what you have to offer this employer. These types of answers generally begin with the words, "*I can...*", and "*Here's how I did...*" There are five simple parts that give body to your answer:

1. *Cite your specific example:*

"I have **handled conflict** in the past by..."

2. *Give details that would tell who, what, where, when and how:*

"...**Two of my staff** were both tasked with **putting in a new program**. They reached a point of **real conflict** over how one of the steps should be done and were not able to work it out. I helped settle the problem by **drawing a flow chart that helped with their plan**."

3. *Give numbers whenever possible to support your statement:*

"The **process** took approximately **30 minutes**."

4. *Show the positive results of your action:*

"The short time it took to walk through my **method** let those staff reach a **useful end on their own**. They were able to **keep going with their project, and used the method that I showed them** to work through their trouble spots. They **started the program a full week earlier** than planned because they had **learned a new way to arrange the plan**."

5. *Show the employer the link between your example and how it applies to this position:*

"I know this position **needs a strong leader that is able to answer to** a bright, and capable team. I was able to **quickly settle conflicts while still teaching and guiding my staff.**"

On the next few pages are questions employers often ask, along with ideas and tips on how to answer. Since these questions are spoken, not written, it helps to make up key words for your answer. The key word notes in the examples have been bolded. Using your notes, practice your answers with a partner. *Review the interview questions on the following pages. Write your keyword answers in the space provided in each page.*

Employer's Expectations during the interview.

Everyone has certain expectations that they would like to have met. The same holds true for the employer. The employer is looking for (expecting) certain behaviors and responses during the interview process. It's on these expectations (the things he/she is looking for) that your interview will be judged.

Appearance:

- Do you look like you belong in the job?
- Is your appearance neat and clean?
- **Is the paper work you present (applications, resumes, work samples, etc.) neat and attractive?**

Attendance and Punctuality:

- Are you on time daily and stay for the full day?
- Are you back from breaks on time?
- Dependable and reliable?
- Will you do the work appropriately?
- Are you a trustworthy employee?
- Can you admit mistakes and accept criticism and instruction?
- Can the employer depend on you to help him in tight spots (like overtime)?
- Are you a regular attending employee?
- Are you willing to make some sacrifices for improved business performance?

Skills:

These are the things that you can do immediately to help the employer meet the needs of his business.

Abilities:

These are transferable skills. If you can type you can probably learn to work other machines that require manual dexterity. These are things that you can learn to do without much training time.

The Mechanics of job interviewing

1. The interview begins when you walk in the door.
2. Be there at least ten minutes early to compose your thoughts.
3. If the interview conflicts with something you must do that is really more important, it is perfectly okay to suggest another time.
4. Best time for interviews? Many people have suggested between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are the best times and days.
5. First impressions are important, and more important when you are meeting a stranger.
6. The employer wants to talk to YOU. Do not take anyone with you to the interview (i.e., friends, boyfriend, girlfriend, children, and relatives).
7. Greet the interviewer by name (be certain you know it). Greet him/her with confidence. Look them in the eye and shake hands firmly.
8. Being nervous is okay. Take a few deep breaths. It often helps to be honest about it-even admitting it-to the interviewer. You will be surprised how quickly one's nervousness disappears once you have brought it up.
9. Watch your posture. Don't slouch, yawn, fidget, or display nervousness in any other way. Be aware of how you are sitting and what your hands are doing.
10. Actively listen. This serves at least two purposes: (1) it draws attention away from yourself and your nervousness, and (2) you will better be able to pick up clues from the interviewer on the things she/he says about the kind of person to be hired. You can use this information to describe yourself as that person.
11. Show proper respect for the interviewer. (If she/he introduces himself or herself as Mr. Jones or Ms. Jones, they are asking you to do the same. If they call themselves by their first name, such as Mike or Nancy, the same is true). Do not refer to them as "Mac", "Honey", or "Buddy".
12. Wait to be invited to sit down. If you are carrying a folder or briefcase with you, do not set it on the interviewer's desk. Set it next to your chair. Also, wait for the interviewer to begin the conversation. She/he may need time to organize your application and/or resume and remember who you are.
13. Answer all the employer's questions accurately, honestly, frankly, and promptly. Do not brag. However, you should use "I" in your responses. Use correct English and appropriate language. Speak distinctly, but keep your answers brief.
14. Do not rush your answers. Never interrupt the interviewer! Let them finish what they want to say. If you are interrupted, wait, and then return to the original point to finish what you want to say.

15. Avoid an argument with your prospective employer. If you disagree, drop it. This is not the time nor place to argue.
16. Avoid mention of your personal problems. The interviewer is interested in your ability, not your troubles. If you discuss problems and show you are desperate, it may sound as if you are begging for a job.
17. Be positive in all your answers. Even a negative experience can have a positive comment. You can turn a negative experience into an asset, and admit it by explaining how you have changed your ways.
18. Be able to verbally give a continuous record of all your jobs, dates of employment, supervisors' names, the exact nature of your work, and the reason why you left a job. This information, and how you give it, is very important.
19. When asked, be able to point out the value derived from training, work experience, unpaid work, hobbies and life experiences as they apply to the position you are seeking. Try not to discuss unrelated things.
20. Be able to give the name, address and position of three people (not related) that know you well as references for the job. Always ask a person if you may use them as a reference before you use their names. It is a good idea to have a copy of this information with you to give to the interviewer if she/he asks for it.
21. Be prepared to ask questions and to answer questions. It is perfectly okay to write out a list of questions to ask your prospective employer.
22. The interviewer will usually close the conversation. Be certain you have said and asked everything you wanted to before she/he begins the closing of the interview. The interviewer may say, "I will be interviewing the remainder of the week and I will call you then"; or, "Thanks for coming in. I'll let you know by phone or letter about my decision next week". Many of us simply say thank you and leave. **DON'T!!!** Use this standard "call back closing" for yourself. "I have some other interviews coming up and I may not be home if you call. May I call you back next Friday?" This is to insure that she/he doesn't forget about you and will be expecting your call to inquire about the decision.

Answer suggestions for "tough questions" asked in interviews

Why do interviewers throw in these unnerving questions? The questions are designed to show how fast you think, how well you handle pressure, and how concise and articulate you are. They are important, and if you are job searching, you'd be wise to arm yourself with impressive replies.

1. "What can I do for you today?"

Employers do not really want a straight answer to this question. They already know that you are applying for their job. Suggested responses should therefore tell the employer what the applicant could do for him/her.

- “Well, actually I’m here to offer you something, and that’s loyal and efficient work as an office clerk.”
- “I’m here to talk about your need for an experienced driver, and the experience and skills I have to offer.”

2. “Tell me about yourself!”

This request is the opportunity to tell them about your skills. They are not interested in hearing a lot of details about your childhood days or personal life. Go straight to discussion of the particular job at hand!

3. “What kind of work are you looking for?”

Be as specific as you can with this particular employer. If you are applying for a specific job, say so. If not, you may want to say something like - “I, of course, want a job in which I will be able to produce for the company and grow along with it.”

4. “Do you know anything about our company?”

Hopefully, you will have done some homework and will know something about the company. But if you don’t, you should be prepared to say something other than “no”, and indicate an interest in knowing more.

5. “Why did your last job end?”

It is not recommended that you lie. But, you don’t necessarily need to tell the whole ugly truth if the whole story will turn the new employer off.

- “I felt that my career potential was limited with that company, so I left to seek work with more advancement opportunities.”
- “I’ve relocated to this area.”

6. “What did you like least about your previous job?”

Wants an honest answer. Reply in a positive manner. Never say anything negative.

7. “What did you like most about your previous job?”

Be specific. “I love organizing things” is vague, ineffective. Far better is “I enjoyed reorganizing the company’s filing system - and my new plan resulted in fewer misplaced papers and greater speed in finding information.”

8. “What would you say is your weakest point?”

Never admit to a real “weakest point”, after all you are selling a product and that product is you. Instead, give the employer a strength, but call it a weakness.

- “Well, my friends consider me to be a real stickler on punctuality. Even with casual social appointments, I always insist on being there on time.”
- “I suppose I’m somewhat of a perfectionist. Even when I’ve completed a large volume of work, I get upset with myself when something turns out not to be totally up to my standards.”

9. "What are your greatest strengths?"

Accept this invitation to sell yourself by citing specific assets you know the employer desires. Interviewers like to hear abstract qualities-loyalty, willingness to work hard, politeness, and promptness-expressed in concrete terms. If you're good at putting people at ease, say so then illustrate by adding for example,

- "Last year, my supervisor asked me to be the resource person for all new employees in our division because he said, 'So many of them had commented on my eagerness to help.'"

10. "What do you hope to be doing five or ten years from now?"

Indicate ambition and confidence in your abilities, but be careful not to appear to be threatening the employer's own job.

- "I would hope to still be employed here in an advanced position which would take advantage of my knowledge, abilities and experience.

11. "Are you looking for permanent or temporary work?"

Answer this one to reflect what the employer is looking for. Remember that no matter what your plans may be, you cannot tell the future. Therefore, be careful not to unnecessarily eliminate yourself from consideration because of personal plans.

12. "What do you expect as a starting salary?"

Never mention a salary figure before the employer's range is known. To do so is to either overprice or under-price yourself. Once the employer mentions a figure, you agree with it. Negotiations, if there are to be any, should be attempted a couple of days later.

- "I would be willing to consider whatever your firm usually pays new people in this position."
- "I would be willing to accept whatever your company policy states."

13. "What was your last salary in your previous position?"

Try to convey that your previous salary has nothing to do with how you can perform in the assignment for the prospective employer.

14. "How much do you expect to be making five years from now?"

You never know what the value of money is going to be five years from now. Don't give a dollar figure. Talk in terms, perhaps, of being more interested in the satisfaction to be derived from the work to be done and the financial rewards will follow.

15. "Why do you want to work for us?"

Compliment the company. Tell them what you can offer.

16. “Why do you want this job?”

Compliment the company. Tell them what you can offer. Never, never, never, ... “I need a job.”

17. “Don’t you feel you are a little too old/young for this job?”

Rely on a past experience to support a “no” answer to this question. If too young, talk about energetic, enthusiasm, etc.

18. “With your background, we believe that you are over-qualified for this position.”

This is the time to really sell yourself. Show that your so-called over-qualification can be a plus for the new employer.

19. “Any objections to a psychological interview and tests?”

Answer should be, “No, I don’t mind. Hope it’s job related.”

20. “What is your philosophy of life?”

A “reaction type” question – interviewer is often “testing” for reaction. Turn question to your advantage. Answer somewhat job related. Keep it short.

21. “Will your former employer(s) give you a good reference?”

You may get around the bad reference by suggesting to the new employer who to call. Or, be honest. If the reference is negative, briefly explain.

22. “How did you get along with your former boss and co-workers?”

Never, never, never “bad mouth” a former employer or the people with whom you worked.

- “Great bunch of people. We all got along just fine.”
- “Well, I certainly have no complaints and I’m sure they don’t have any either.”

23. “How long did it take you to get here today?”

This is a disguised question. In response to any question or comment regarding your address or transportation, volunteer enough information so that the employer will be satisfied that getting to work on time is no problem.

24. “I’ve interviewed several people with more experience than you. Why should I hire you instead of them?”

You don’t know the other people so do not comment on them. Refer to the job candidate you do know (YOU), and find some indication of what the employer stands to gain by hiring you.

- “I can’t speak for the others, but I can for myself. I can assure you that I always learn new assignments very rapidly”, and “I’m sure it would be very hard for you to find someone who could beat my eagerness and capacity for work.”

25. “What do you do in your spare time?”

Workaholics aren’t always the best employees, so this question is asked in hopes of hiring well-rounded individuals. Sam Adams, a senior personnel consultant for ASOSA Personnel explains, “In a sales job, for instance, ice is broken by sharing small talk on common interests or hobbies. That’s very difficult if the salesperson’s only interest is work.”

- Wayne E. Calhoun, president of Professional Placement, Inc., adds, “Your answer gives you dimension. For example, if you like to play bridge, the interviewer might surmise that you enjoy other analytical activities.”
- Highlight pastimes that would be an asset to the job you seek or that you may have in common with the employer. (If the employer has a picture of his/her family, you might say, “I enjoy spending time with my family.”)

26. “Are you applying for any other jobs?”

This is not a trick question! In today’s tight job market, no one expects you to apply to only one company.

27. Silence!

You’ve finished your answer and are awaiting the next question. Silence! Suddenly, you feel uncomfortable. To fill the void, you begin babbling an unprepared spiel.

- Though it may seem difficult, you simply smile and remain silent. Interviewers often use silence to see if you can handle stress and still maintain poise.

28. Personal questions.

A lot of people who’ve been through the interviewing process report facing personal questions that don’t apply to the job and may be illegal to ask. How will you handle these?

You could tell the interviewer that the question is illegal or off-limits. But, this will likely antagonize them and leave you without a job offer. If you refuse to answer, you may never get that chance. The only exception is when you’re certain the answer will sour the interviewer’s impression of you. Don’t be afraid to say, “I’ve never been asked a question like that before. May I think about it for a minute?” The interviewer will respect your honesty and your habit of thinking before you speak.

Practice interview questions

Your qualifications, sample questions:

- "Can you tell me something about yourself?"
- "How are you qualified for this job?"
- "Why do you think we should hire you for the job?"
- "How does your work history relate to the job?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your key word answer:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. Can you answer by giving examples of what you have done as proof of your skills?
5. Tell me what you can do for the company based on your past jobs or schooling.
6. Cover three to five subjects; be clear and brief, bringing out your skills and knowledge.

Sample answer to "Can you tell me something about yourself?"

"I have **two years experience** working as a **cashier** in a small market. **I operated a computerized cash register, helped customers and stocked shelves.** I also **posted payments received** on private gas accounts. **I like working with the public** and take pride in the fact that I am always **friendly and polite** even when the market is very busy. My **cash receipts and postings always balanced.** The owners knew I was very **reliable** and I was often given **extra work** such as **making bank deposits** and **keeping cash drawer balance sheets.** I know that your store insists on meeting customer needs. **I listen well**, so I usually **know what customers are looking for** and **I enjoy solving problems.**"

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable for you in an interview.

Your Accomplishments, sample questions:

- "What do you consider your greatest successes?"
- "Tell me two or three things that you have done well."
- "What are your greatest strengths?"
- "Describe a problem that you faced and how you solved it."
- "What are your weaknesses?"
- "What are the areas where you need to grow?"
- "Give me an example of a success that made you very happy, and why."

Things to keep in mind when writing your key word answer:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. What can you do for the employer? Answer by giving examples as proof of your skills.
5. If asked about "weakness" show how you've grown as a result of finding and fixing the issue.
6. Show personal responsibility.
7. When bringing out strengths, select at least three, all needed in the new job.

Sample answer: **"Give an example of a success that made you very happy"**

I am good at **seeing what needs to be done** and working out a way to make it happen. For example, **when I worked at a family restaurant**, I saw that it sometimes took a couple of hours to get the **replacement workers in when someone called in sick**. I suggested the **roster be posted** and that **workers sign in the times that were best for them to be called as a replacement**. This really **lowered the time-spent calling, 75% of the time a replacement worker was already in place when the shift started**. I know **your restaurant values** quick and efficient service for diners. That new roster made a big difference. Our **customers did not have to wait for service** due to our being short-staffed."

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Your Career Goals, sample questions:

- "Where do you see yourself in five years from now?"
- "What are your short term and long range plans?"
- "Why do you want to work for this company?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your key word response:

1. At what point in the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. What can you do for the employer? Give examples of what you have done as proof of your skills.
5. What have you learned in your study of the company that you really like?
6. Describe your goals as they fit the skills and duties of the job.
7. Show your ability to give to/work for the goals of the company.

Sample answer to, "Why do you want to work for this company?"

When I made up my mind to go into real estate sales, **I studied different companies** and their ways of going after home and business sales. I **talked to people who worked here and read reviews**. One thing I really like about your **firm is its integrity**. Your strength has been in **client gain, fairness and honesty**. You have been able to get high profits and not lower your standards. **My values are similar** to yours. I have **strong speaking skills**. As an **active listener**, I am able to find out a client's overall goal with a sale or purchase. Because of that **I know about the local market and working to meet my customers' needs**, I have **closed 50 deals** during the past year. I take pride in being a **top producer** and **upholding my steady integrity**."

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Your people skills, attitude and personality, sample questions:

- "Do you prefer to work alone or with others?"
- "How would others describe you?"
- "Tell me about your past employers".
- "How well do you learn or take correction?"
- "What work did you do working as part of a team?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your keyword response:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. What can you do for the employer?
5. *(Give examples of what you have done as proof of your skills.)*
6. Focus on your abilities to get along with others.
7. Even if the work is a one-person job, the employer still wants to know if you can work on a team.

Sample answer to, "Do you prefer to work alone or with others?"

"I have the ability to work **both alone and as part of a team. I think well, stay on track by myself, and learn quickly.** My personal goals on the job are to **do the work well, and just the way it is needed.** I know that work on a production line **needs special skills, but I also have the ability to speak well** with others on the line. This keeps the flow of work up to the top level. **I also like working as part of a team.**

Last year, XYZ Co. began a **program of team growth.** The unit **I worked in worked together to set up a new system** that helped us **lower production time for the spindle widget.** The lesser time allowed a 10% increase in the number of spindle widgets being made. I learned from that experience, that **I am very helpful in a team because I can help put others' ideas into action."**

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Money and benefits, sample questions:

- "What kind of salary are you expecting?"
- "How much did you make on your last job?"
- "We usually pay new employees between \$8 and \$12 per hour. Does this work for you?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your keyword response:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. What can you do for the employer? (Give examples of what you have done as proof of your skills.)
5. Have you checked to find out the usual pay in the area for this type of work?
6. Do not state a money amount until they have actually offered you the job.

Sample answer to, "We usually pay new employees between \$8 and \$12 per hour. Does this work for you?"

"I am interested in the salary, of course, but **want to work for your company** for several reasons. Your company has been one of the **most solid in the field** for the last five years and has **regularly upgraded staff technical skills** and I like that. Based on **what I know about the job and this kind of work**, I was looking at a range of \$9.50 to \$13.00 per hour. It seems like our **ranges are pretty close**. I'm sure we'll be able to **reach a fair agreement**."

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Your reasons for leaving and attitudes about your last job, sample questions:

- "Why did you leave your last job?"
- "Why have you been unemployed for so long?"
- "Why did you decide to change jobs?"
- "How did you get along with your last supervisor?"
- "What did you like most/least about your last job?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your keyword response:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
4. What can you do for the employer?
5. (Give examples of what you have done as proof of your skills.)
6. Give a positive light to your reason for leaving and the people you worked for.
7. If you were fired or left due to a bad situation, take responsibility for your own actions.
8. Let them know that you learned something from a bad situation.
9. Keep these answers simple, direct and honest.

Sample answer to. "Why did you leave your last job?"

"I'll be honest with you, **I was let go** from my last job for too many absences. I let a **personal problem take control of my work duties** and missed some days when I really should have been there. It caused **a lot of extra work for my coworkers**. I've called my supervisor since then and told him **how sorry I was for the mistake**. Going through that **taught me better ways on how to manage my personal life so that it will not hurt my work.**"

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Behavior based questions of concern, sample questions:

More and more questions are being asked about how you would act in a given situation. It is the employer's way to test how you will answer to their common or unusual work events. It can fall under any of the question ranges already used, or it can be something that refers to a special field of work.

- "How would you handle...?"
- "What would you do if...?"

Things to keep in mind when writing your keyword response:

1. At what point of the interview would this question be asked?
 2. What skills is the employer looking for in your answer?
 3. What employer need can you fit your answer to?
 4. What can you do for the employer?
 5. *(Give examples of what you have done as proof of your skills.)*
 6. When you can, talk about like situations in your past. *(Give proof by example)*
 7. If you have never gone through a same type of situation, take a moment to think out what traits the employer is looking for, or hidden concerns he/she may have.
- Always remember to add your skills and how you would use them.

Example answers to: "What would you do if a good customer got upset over the phone?"

"That did happen to me when I worked as the bookkeeper for Hawkeye Medical Practice. An **elderly patient was upset** that she had gotten a **second billing** for something she thought that her insurance company had already paid. By the time the call was passed on to me she was frantic. She thought her insurance would not cover her and that she would have to pay the bill.

I listened carefully to her problem, answered her questions as well as I could, and agreed to look into it more for her. I told her that I would call her back, and I did. She was **much calmer** by the time the first phone call ended. **I looked into the situation** with the insurance company, I was **able to find an error** made by the insurance company and **got them to fix it quickly**. She sent me a thank you note. It took very **little time on my part, but I fixed the error and left a valued customer happy.**"

Select one of the questions above and write a key word response. Pick the question you think would you be LEAST comfortable with in an interview.

Possible interview questions to prepare for

1. Why did you choose your particular field of work?
2. What do you think determines a person's progress in a good job?
3. What have you learned from some of the jobs you have held?
4. How long do you expect to work here?
5. Define cooperation?
6. What types of people are difficult for you to get along with?
7. What jobs have you enjoyed the most? The least? Why?
8. What are your own special abilities?
9. What kind of supervisor gets the best performance from you?
10. Some people are short-tempered and impatient in their reactions. How would you describe yourself?
11. How do you feel about your career progress to date?
12. Tell me about your past job. What were your key responsibilities? What did you find most challenging?
13. What frustrates you about your job?

14. How many hours per day do you think a person should spend on his/her job?
15. What do you feel is an acceptable attendance record?
16. Do you arrive at work on time?
17. What do you think are your strengths? Weaknesses?
18. How did your supervisor treat others in your department?
19. What is unique about you?
20. What have you done that indicates you are qualified for this job?
21. Do you have any questions?
22. Describe your education as it applies to this position. What were the relevant courses and what did they entail?
23. How well did you do in school? In what areas were you particularly successful and in which areas were you less successful?
24. Would you describe your previous job in terms of the duties you performed? How would they relate to the position we've been discussing?
25. What types of computers, office machines, etc. do you operate?
26. What kinds of people do you generally encounter in your job?
27. Are these encounters generally positive and satisfying?
28. How much independence were you given on your last job? Tell me about how you used it?
29. What types of problems might you anticipate if you came to work in this department? How do you think you might deal with them?
30. What aspects of your job did you like the most? The least? Why did you want to leave that job?
31. What other questions do you have?

Questions you may ask the interviewer

Most interviews will end with the employer asking if you have questions. This question is often used to determine how interested you are in the position, and how much thought you have given to the interview. Listen carefully to the employer's answers, you can learn even more about the organization you hope to join. Following are questions you can ask at the interview.

1. I understand this is a _____ position. Could you tell me a little more about what I'll be doing on the job? What is an average day like?
2. In general, what type of person does your company usually hire?
3. Where will I be working?
4. How do I compare with the other applicants you have seen?
5. When do you need someone to start work?
6. When do you plan to make your decision?
7. What is the hiring process here? Will there be a second interview?
8. Would it be possible to have a tour of the office or plant?
9. Have you interviewed inside employees?
10. How many people are you interviewing?
11. Who would be my direct supervisor?
12. Does this company offer any benefits such as medical insurance?
13. Are tools or specific uniforms required?
14. (If known) What is the salary range for this position?
15. May I call you? I will be seeking employment and would hate to miss your call.

Whenever possible, try to link your questions to topics that arose during the interview. For example: "Earlier, we discussed my short and long term goals. How do those fit in with the goals of your organization?"

Close the interview by asking for the job or a time when you can call back to check.

The Thank You Note

Send a thank you note immediately after any interview to the person(s) who interviewed you. This thank you note may actually be the final decision in the selection process. Reasons for writing a thank you note are:

- It marks the writer as knowledgeable, considerate individual.
- It demonstrates appreciation for the employer's time and effort.
- It reminds the reader of who you are (some interviewers see many applicants per week and have difficulty distinguishing among them).
- It reinforces your "fit" with the organization.
- It indicates that you continue to be interested in the position.

If an employer is weighting the difference between two equally qualified applicants, a thank you note can make the difference on the decision.

Sample Thank You Note

Today's date

Person's First and Last Name who interviewed you

Job Title

Target Company

Street Address

City, State Zip

Dear <Name of person who interviewed you>

I want to thank you for taking the time to talk with me on <date of interview>. It was a pleasure to meet you and to learn more about the <name of> position at the Target Company. I also appreciated the opportunity to discuss my skills and experience.

I was extremely impressed by what I learned about your organization and would be pleased to become a part of it. I appreciate all your consideration for this opportunity.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name and phone number

Testing

For some jobs, you may need to take a test. Typically, the job announcement or advertisement will state if a test is required. Some companies use testing as a normal part of their recruitment and hiring process. There are several types of selection and job fitness tests.

- Aptitude tests predict your ability to learn and perform job tasks.
- Skill tests measure your knowledge of and ability to perform a job (like typing speed test for office work, knowledge of street names and routes for a delivery driver, etc.).
- Literacy tests measure reading and arithmetic levels.
- Personality tests evaluate mental, emotional, and temperamental makeup.
- Integrity tests evaluate the likelihood of employee honesty, reliability, or theft.
- Physical ability tests measure strength, flexibility, stamina, and speed for jobs that require physical performance.
- Medical tests determine physical fitness for a specific job.
- Drug tests indicate the presence of drugs that could impair job performance or threaten the safety of others.

Preparing for tests

You can't study specifically for aptitude tests, but you can prepare to do your best by taking other tests. Look for tests or quizzes in magazines and books. Set time limits. Practicing will help you feel comfortable when you are tested. Brush up on your job skills. For example, if you are taking a typing test, practice typing. If you are taking a construction test, review construction books and blueprints. Prepare for physical tests by performing activities similar to those required for the job. For literacy tests, review and complete exercises in reading and math books or enroll in remedial classes. Maintain a clean and sober lifestyle and drug testing will never be a problem.

Tips for taking tests

- Put together a list of what you need for the test (pencil, eyeglasses, calculator, photo identification, etc.). Check the list before leaving for the test.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- If you do not feel well, call and reschedule the test.
- Leave for the test site in time to arrive 15 minutes early.
- If you have any physical difficulties, tell the test administrator.
- If you do not understand the test instructions, ask for help before the test begins.
- Work as fast as you can. Do not linger over difficult questions.
- Ask if guessing is penalized. If it is not, guess on questions you are not sure about.
- You may be able to retake the test. Ask about the re-testing policy.

Get a Job, Find a Better Job, Start Your Career

In the modern work place circumstances continue to change and evolve driven by competition in a global economy and a worldwide labor market.

In the past the work place success was described as hard work plus loyalty equaled job security. Today, it is skills plus performance equals employability.

Volunteer for training and new assignments on your new job. Look at people you work with that are moving up. These are workers who have shown themselves by performance to be willing to do undesirable assignments or take on new duties and tasks.

You'll work hard to get a decent job, you will then face new responsibilities and challenges along with it. Learn new skills that will help you advance and get promotions. The longer you stay on a job, the more money you will make. You can plan your future and reach personal goals. Develop and earn the respect of your co-workers.

Objectives:

- Use your skills to establish yourself on a new job.
- Establish good work habits and ethics
- Keeping your job
- Advance in your job
- Your lifestyle as a job hunter

Overview:

Accomplishing goals can lead you on to meeting future goals. For example, getting a job at an entry level can give you experience to get a better job in the near future. Successes are built on smaller achievements. Think of each achievement as one-step closer to you goal of a satisfying career. Also, as you build momentum in employment, others start to take notice, and you build up credibility. This is how many career advancements occur.

The way the economy is today you have to have to plan for the unexpected. What if you got laid off after a month or two on the new job? Once working you may have stopped looking for work this is generally when a job you would have liked better becomes available. Adapt your lifestyle around job hunting, stay in close contact with your network. Keep your master job application and resume up-to-date with each new job as you start it. There are always better paying jobs becoming available, better work environments, chances for promotions, benefit packages and you deserve every chance to compete for these opportunities.

Use the skills you have to get the job and succeed in it.

Don't be afraid to use your skills to do the best job. You may not be perfect doing everything at first, but you'll get better with practice, and what's important is to learn and do the job the way your employer wants it done now.

Learn how to learn. You must be willing to learn new skills because your job duties probably will change. Seize every chance to learn new skills. Volunteer to help out on other functions and tasks when you have the opportunity.

Use your interpersonal skills to your advantage. Get along with your supervisor and co-workers. Your supervisor expects you to be dependable and to do your best work and get along with others on the job. Getting to know your co-workers and being able to get along with them will increase your chances of being more successful in the job.

Good communication skills can take you along way. You will be expressing your thoughts, needs and want as you talk with your supervisor and co-workers. The following tips can help you in any conversation:

- Remember people's names. Ask questions to get the conversation moving. Be a good listener.
- Think before you talk. Organize you thoughts using the best words to convey your meaning.
- Speak clearly. Avoid mumbling. Pronounce your words clearly without speaking too fast or too slow, too loudly or too softly.
- Use your best grammar and do not use slang.

Establishing good work habits are essential to holding your new job and becoming part of the team. Here are some tips to have solid work habits:

1. Be on time every day, especially after lunch and breaks. Timeliness displays your dependability. Plan to show up at work a few minutes early each day to allow for anything that may unexpectedly delay you. It's very important to be at work when you are needed.
2. Look the part by wearing clean and appropriate dress for the job. Shine your shoes. Wear conservative fashions, no flashy colors or patterns that clash. Avoid excessive jewelry, make up, and strong colognes or perfumes.
3. Follow all employee rules. Be especially careful to keep all safety rules. Thoroughly know your employers' policies and procedures in the Employee Handbook. There may be some unwritten rules you need to learn as well. Make friends, not enemies to learn more about these.
4. Learn the job inside and out before you make tactful suggestions on how the job could be done better. Keep your eyes and ears open, but your mouth closed, for the first month or two.

5. Show an interest in your work by doing everything to the best of your ability. Try coming up with solutions before asking for help. Build a reputation as a problem solver.
6. Be loyal to your employer. Don't criticize the boss or the company products or services.
7. If you want to advance on the job, figure out a way to make money for the company or improve performance. Take initiative and lend a hand with other workers' assignments and tasks this will show you are a team player.
8. Be genuine by offering a warm friendly greeting, smile and extend a firm handshake to greet you supervisor and co-workers. Mind your manners and avoid office politics and gossip.
9. Go out of your way to provide friendly, helpful service to the customers. The customer pays your wage and building repeat business is how businesses succeed. Be enthusiastic and willing to go the "extra mile" to get the job done.
10. Everyone makes mistakes, especially when you're on a new job. If you make a mistake, admit it and be willing to correct it. It shows that you are honest. Be sure to ask questions if you don't understand instructions, and listen carefully to the answers.
11. Be flexible as a new employee you will be asked to do some tasks that you may dislike. Show your maturity and handle it by doing your best. Sometimes you have to pay dues to prove yourself in a new job and earn better work assignments.
12. Try to never ask for time off of work on short notice unless you have an emergency that nobody else can resolve. Develop a back up plan of alternatives for childcare and transportation. Don't let the necessities become an issue to hold your job.

A Good Worker is:

List Your Examples

Dependable	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
Efficient	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

A Good Worker:	List Your Examples
Takes Initiative	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Your Employee Handbook lists your employers' policies, procedures, and expectations of their workers.

Most employers hire new workers on a probationary period to begin with. During this period all new employees are evaluated. The things employees are evaluated on are not just how well they can do the work. They also are evaluated on their attitude, attendance and timeliness, how well they get along with other workers, if they follow instructions and policies defined in the Employee Handbook.

The following information is taken directly out of real employer handbooks for new employees from various companies.

Basic Responsibilities and Skills listed in Employee Handbooks:

- Arrive for work on time on those days designated on the schedule.
- Be dressed in clean and proper work attire or uniform.
- Clock in and start work at the time designated on the schedule, and clock out at the end of your shift.
- Check with the Supervisor on duty to find out your job assignment for your shift.
- Present a pleasant, good-natured attitude to every customer you come in contact with-no exceptions. Each customer helps to pay your wages, treat them accordingly.
- Cater to each and every customer as though his order was your first and last chance to impress the public with your superior service and courtesy.
- Serve our customers with quality goods and services.
- Take responsibility to replenish supplies when you use the last item.
- Rotate supplies. Use the "first in, first out" method where older items in supply are used first, and replenished with fresher stock.
- Keep the lot, lobby, restrooms, and your workplace clean and organized. Clean as you go.
- Perform such other duties as your supervisor directs in an efficient and timely manner.

You are a "public relations" representative in any business. These are general skills that everybody should know and perform. It is your responsibility to perform them with maximum effectiveness and results for your employer.

Your Employee Handbook will also list examples of unacceptable behavior. This is only a partial list. Depending on the situation, the employee can be given time to correct the behavior. However, if the problem continues, it will lead to dismissal.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviors:

- Missing work or arriving late frequently without permission. If you must miss work or arrive late, call your supervisor at least two hours ahead of time to give notice of the circumstance.
- Failing to do your work duties or otherwise intentionally wasting time.
- Using the telephone for excessive personal calls or conducting personal business during work hours. This includes in-coming and out-going calls.
- Violating safety or health rules.

Examples of Gross Misconduct: These are acts that are considered to be gross misconduct, behavior so offensive that the employee can face immediate dismissal.

- Threatening, cussing or abusing any person while on company property.
- Falsifying any record or giving false information to anyone whose duty is to make records.
- Fighting or attempting to hurt another while on company premises or while conducting company business.
- Sexual, racial or any other form of harassment towards any employee or customer.
- Possession of a weapon while on company property or while conducting company business.
- Theft or other dishonest acts while on company property or while conducting company business.
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or any other activity on company property involving alcohol, illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs.
- Gross insubordination or refusals to follow work instructions from your supervisor.
- False accusations against company or against another employee or customer.
- Any other action equally threatening to the company's best interests.

The Employee Handbook also explains the process for performance, merit raises and promotions. Businesses and companies want to be fair about evaluating your work performance and determining wage increases. Your financial and career progress is based on your productivity, experience, job interest and proven ability coupled with the need and performance of the business. Your job description covers all areas that you are responsible for. Ask your supervisor to spell out their expectations of you. Clear communication is extremely important.

The performance, merit raise and promotion process is designed to hold employees accountable for performance expectations, ensure fair compensation, foster career growth by identifying strengths and areas for improvement, guarantee recognition, and provide an opportunity for discussions with your supervisor and management. Promoting employees from within the company saves businesses time and money. The talents, training, potential, experience and goals of current employees will generally be considered before recruiting and hiring anyone outside of the company.

Why is an Employee Handbook important to the employer? _____

What is the most important information for a new employee to know in the Employee Handbook?

Thinking like an employer, what would you include in your Employee Handbook?

What does it take to get ahead? How do I avoid a relapse to where I started and actually advance?

With consistently sustained attendance, learning new skills and tasks, productivity and performance you will earn advancement in the job you have. Achieving stable employment involves using these skills and behaviors that you may have little or no experience with. However, it is important to remember you have abilities, motivation and strengths you can count on. Make up your mind this is the job you really want and will do what it takes to grow with it, or simply keep looking for that job while working. You'll find it's easier to get a better job while working a job. You are in a situation with more control over your next job offer and can choose one you want.

It will still be challenging and demanding. Use your self-management skills by anticipating your reactions to high stress situations and you are prepared with coping skills for goal achievement, task accomplishment, and strengthened problem solving abilities. Your attitude in the belief you can stay on task will build the expectation of success and not give up too easily and relapse to where you were.

As with anything in life, things change, planning is still the key to stay with, or ahead of those changes that will happen. A complete person balances both the working life and home life they live. You can not develop enough alternatives to predict all the circumstances that may happen, but your investment of attention and time will prepare you to do your best balancing act and not stress out. Your dedication to problem

solving, faced with obstacles and frustrations, is critical to hold on to what you've earned. Don't lose all you've accomplished so far by giving in. Deal with it, and get ahead, deny it and you're sliding back into an un-useful mind set.

Recognizing relapse triggers at home and work

A relapse trigger is any situation that poses a threat to the your sense of control, and/or sense of what is best for yourself. In the real world you have to learn to break down the hassles of normal life into smaller, more manageable problems you can then deal with. This means focus on the little things of the bigger problem, and look at how to work the problem from the bottom to top, and what is the proper sequence that gets the solution of the bigger problem.

For the following situations reply with your actions in the sequence you would do them to successful deal with each:

1. With 30 minutes to get to work you are ready to go and discover your purse or wallet is missing. How do you deal with this?

2. Driving on your way to work your car quits running five miles away. How do you deal with this?

3. It's payday and co-workers invite you out to celebrate your first check. You know that the entire amount is obligated for bills and budget. How do you deal with this?

Your Lifestyle as a Job Hunter

The quicker you learn that you'll be job hunting the rest of your life is a huge leap forward. Congratulations, you are now a part of the modern labor market. As your job hunting lifestyle continues to develop your next job leads, and further career development, consider these trends to make realistic decisions about your future.

- **Lifelong Learning is the way to Lifelong Employability.** Continue your education as far as you can. Re-tooling your mind with the skills that employer's value highly means you can find others jobs easily when you are laid off. Expectation of lifelong employment with one business or company no longer exists. To maintain yourself in stable employment and be self-supporting advancing your education is the key.
- **Diversity in the Workplace is here to stay.** Employers value employees who can work with and accept cultural differences. The modern labor market has more women, older workers, foreign born peoples of different races and ethnic groups than ever before. You must have the attitude to fit in right along side anyone.
- **You may have to join the Temporary Workforce** to get a better job after. It's policy at many companies today to utilize temporary or contract workers as a way to try people out for their jobs. This means you have more flexibility, but limited benefits and no job security.
- **Computers, English, Math, Science and Communication skills** are and will always are in demand by employers. This knowledge and expertise are the tools that generate economic growth and give employers the competitive edge with technically savvy employees.
- **Customer Service** is crucial for businesses and companies to gain and maintain customers in economic tight times. Employees demonstrating positive, helpful attitudes towards customers, supervisors and co-workers are the ones they keep.
- **Be aware of the Economic Conditions** in your local, national, and global labor markets. Literally thousands of jobs are created or destroyed by technological advances, corporate restructuring, and economic down or up turns. Be prepared for it.
- **Stagnate Wage Growth** is the modern trend where employers are willing to replace long-term employees with younger, less expensive workers. This practice has kept wages flat.
- **High Turnover Rates** in employment. You can expect to have many jobs and change careers regularly during your working lifetime. The old fashion career ladder no longer exists. The reality is only you are in control to make decisions about choosing a career path and the training you need to qualify.
- **You are the Free Agent to meet the Employers' Needs.** Accept this relationship with employers where you provide abilities, knowledge, and skills in exchange for wages and benefits as long as both parties are satisfied. The relationship is over when one party wants out or the contract expires.
- **Do what You Love** by focusing on work that is fulfilling and interesting in making career plans. Since job security doesn't exist anymore you might as well do what you like while you can do it.